MORE POKES ● MORE REVIEWS ● NO COMPETITION

No. 67
HFL 5·75

SINCLAIR User

£1 OCTOBER 1987



XECUTOR BLASTS ZYNAPS!

(AND EATS ROAD RUNNER FOR BREAKFAST!!)

PCW SHOW
COMPLETE GUIDE FOR SPECTRUM OWNERS

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★ WHAT THE STARS DO WITH THEIR SPECTRUMS!!! ★

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"Wizball is the finest release this year. The scenario and game design are so original... Playing is a joy... The graphics, sound and general presentation are second to none, and combined with the thoughtful attention to detail and the comprehensive series of game variations, you end up with something rather special. Don't delay, go to your software shop and say 'Mr. Retailer, swiftly hand me a copy of Wizball so that I can go home and play it forthwith.' "An essential purchase."
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ARCADE

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Solomon's Key ▼



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COVER SMASH

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Better than Zynaps? Could well be. It's the first release from The Edge's new label ACE

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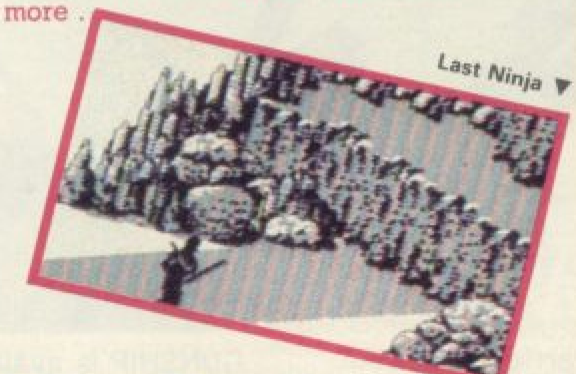
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Lotsa lotsa spondoolies to save on Solomon's Key, Athena, Wizball, Renegade and more



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Driller ▼



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Well you told us you wanted more Pokes. And you get your wish. Meet and greet Poke City and a bumper eight Pokes for you to type in. Check out the famous titles to dismember: Death Wish III, Slap Fight, Game Over Parts 1 and 2 and more . . .



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Our unique guide to the micro event of the year – check out our detailed survey of whose showing what for the Spectrum where. Indispensible, too, is the SU read-all-about-all-the-great-games-and-compos-and-freebees-we've-got-and-where-to-find-us guide

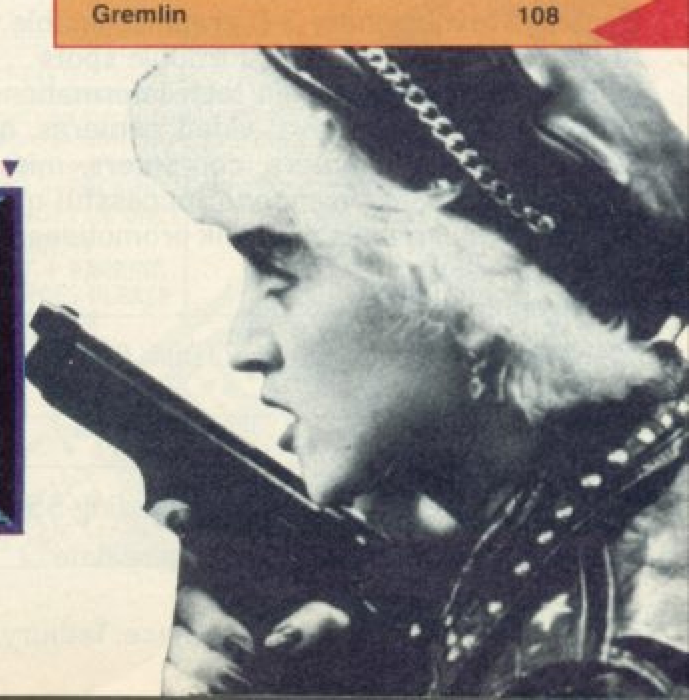
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We exclusively don't speak to any of the greatest stars in the entire world and ask them what they do with their Spectrums. The results will surprise you. Actually the fact that we did this feature at all surprised us . . .

REGULARS



UNDER RAPS!

David Aubry Jones' feet have hardly touched ground after finishing **Mercenary** for Novagen, than he's already cracking on with a sequel. Mercenary II will be called **Damocles**, and will be out as soon as he can manage it

Not content with producing the thoroughly absurd **Trans-atlantic Balloon Doo-Dah** with Richard Branson, Maxwell Technology is working for Virgin again. This time it's something a bit more sensible. **Duel Master** is based on the interactive series of books, *Challenge of the Magi*, and it promises to be an arcade game steeped in magic and mystery. It'll be available for Christmas

Gremlin's in-house programming team is hard at work for US Gold busy doing the follow-up to **Gauntlet**, last year's top selling game which they wrote. Called, unsurprisingly enough, **Gauntlet II** it features all the best bits of **Gauntlet II** the coin-op, such as sticky floors, stun tiles, ejector pads and lots of ghosts.

Andromeda – those Hungarian group of lads – is busy working on **Impossible Mission II** from Epyx via US Gold. It's good new because the original **Impossible Mission** was very very good on the C64 though never converted across (because Epyx is an American firm. **IMII** is set for a November release

Whod

SILVER SCREEN

Ever fancied being in pictures? Directing gems of the silver screen? Well now's yer chance.

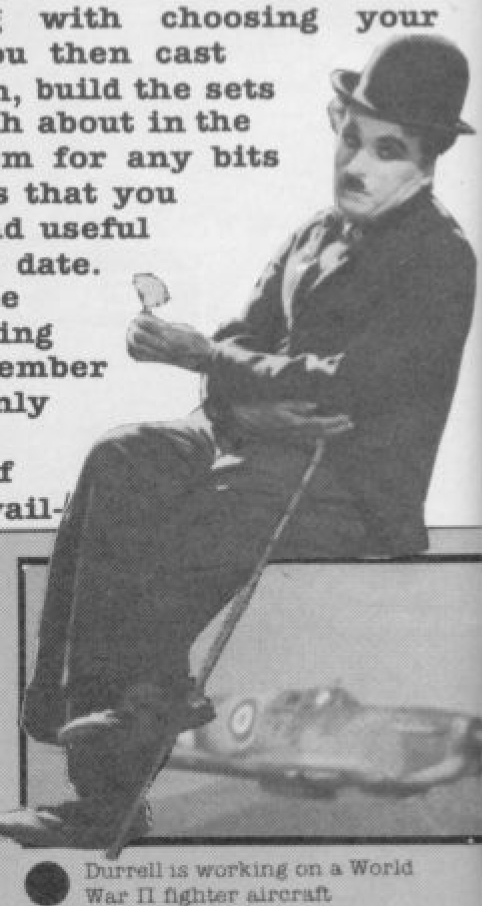
Three of the greatest stars ever to appear on celuloid, Charlie Chaplin, Marilyn Monroe and James Dean, are all to star in computer games of their own, courtesy of US Gold.

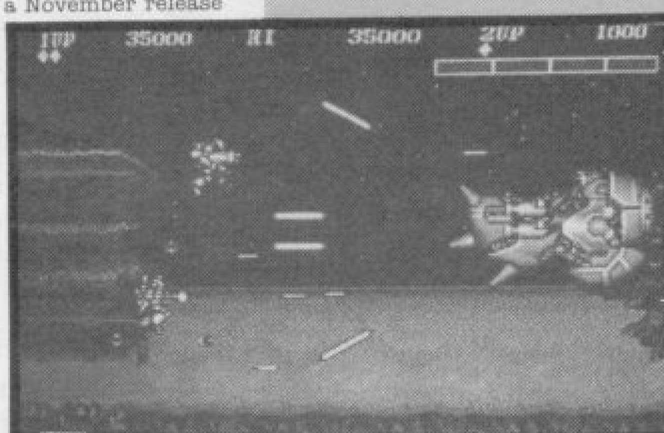


First off will be Charlie himself, in a little game-ette by the name of Starring Charlie Chaplin. **Yes, your chance to be a movie director, so dig out your jodphurs, flat cap, loud hailer and deckchair with your name written on the back.**

Starring Charlie Chaplin **will be a kind of DIY movie-builder program, with strategy and arcade overtones.**

Starting with choosing your script, you then cast your film, build the sets and mooch about in the props room for any bits and pieces that you might find useful at a later date. And while you're doing this, remember there's only a limited amount of money avail-





View from the Side Arm coin-op on the way from US Gold▶

More coin-op mania! Probe Software is currently programming **Side Arm** and **Bionic Command** both for US Gold. What with the recently completed **Rygar** and **Solomon's Key**, US Gold is keeping the team at Probe pretty busy. Both **Side Arm** and **Bionic Commando** are coin-op conversions from Cap Com games and both are intended for release on US Gold's new Go! label

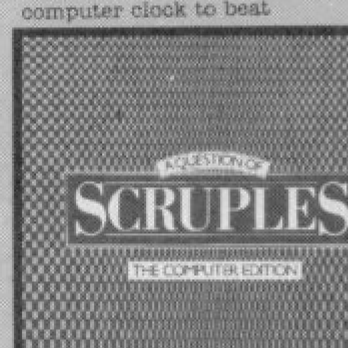
Plus 3 price latest shock! Amstrad gives in!! Prices set to plummet!!! Yep, it's true, Amstrad has finally realised what everybody else realised all along – the fact the £249 is just too much to pay for the disc model. Now, as from October 1 we can reveal the price of the disc-based 128K+3 model is to fall to just £199 (and an excellent buy at the price it is too). Not only that, but it looks as though the shop price of the cassette-based 128K+2 will fall as well, probably down about £10 to £139

Rumour has it that a certain well-known software house is to launch (if you'll pardon the pun) the preposterously named Piranha Fin Club. More details after the great event

Virgin is awfully excited about two new licenses which are due out fairly soon, both from Leisure Genius, which specialises in board game conversions.

First up is **Scruples**, the popular board game last year where players are faced with various moral dilemmas and have to choose solutions and whether or not to tell the truth. Since the programming is by Sentient Software, most recently irresponsible for **HTBACB**, starring Ade Edmonson (you know the one we mean), I have a feeling that **Scruples** might well be a little wriskie.

Secondly there's **Scrabble De Luxe**, a 128K-only version of Leisure Genius' earlier game. It'll also be available on disc for the 128K+3. It's a basically a graphically enhanced version of the Psion original with an incredible eight skill levels, a vocabulary of nearly 23,000 words and a computer clock to beat



Durrell is working on a World War II fighter aircraft simulation called **Spitfire**. No details yet but it's due in the shops before Christmas

Compilation time again and it looks a goodie. US Gold is getting into gear for Chrimbo I suppose. Anyway, being a generous firm its going to give us a **Guantlet, Leaderboard, Infiltrator, Ace of Aces** and **World Games,** all for £9.99! Stack me! Due out on November 1st, the compilation will be called, unusually accurately for a compilation title **Solid Gold**

The coin-op licence war is really picking up speed. Bids for the computer conversion rights to **After Burner** are already being made, despite the fact that almost nobody has seen the machine, and the only console in the UK has only been taking people's pennies for a couple of weeks. The reason for all the excitement? **After Burner** is Sega's follow-up to **Out Run** – currently the hottest coin-op since **Guntlet**. It's been programmed by the same team, it's a full sit-in panning/tilting console, and it's a get fighter simulation of startling wonderfulness. Watch this space...



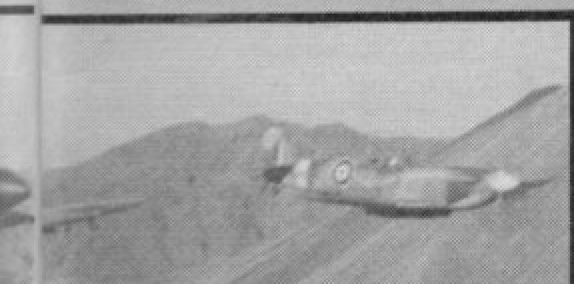
able to you, and you can't afford to go over budget.

Not only do you go through the motions of making the picture but you can also control the central character, Charlie himself. Keep him away from the villains of the piece, and save yourself money at the same time. The finale comes, US Gold tells us, when the film is shown to an audience, and according to the reaction that you get, you either get to make a lot of dough and go and make another film, or get hounded out of Hollywood, branded a complete failure.

The game's being programmed by Canvas, the team responsible for Leaderboard, **and you can't say fairer than that really can you?**

Look out for fame and fortune in the move business around about October time.

Don't wait up nights for the Marilyn Monroe or James Dean programs though. Neither is yet even storyboarded and coding is some time off being started. Neither are expected until well into next year■



● Here's the address of the Konami Software Club which we forgot to print last month: WV Supplies, Bank Building, Bank Street, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 2JL

● Firebird Silver is to bring out a range of superior budget titles for £2.99 – a rival for Mastertronics MAD range. The idea is to provide the punter with a fairly cheap game, but of a slightly higher quality than the normal budget games. That's the idea, anyway. First up will be **Car Wars,** out at the end of September

● Next time you load up **Gauntlet** or **Renegade** take a good long look at yourself. Are you frothing at the mouth? Do you have a psychotic glint in your eye? There's a growing concern – in certain quarters – over the effect that fantasy games could be having on the people who play them. Teddy Taylor, the Conservative MP for Southend West has called for fantasy games featuring death and violence to be banned – which is just about all of them according to our reckoning, saying that they can influence people's actions in real life and are therefore highly dangerous when played by impressionable young people. Sounds like Teddy could have become the victim of a fantasy game himself...

● The Edge has launched a new label. It's ACE, a brand new arcade, action-packed label, the first release from which is our cover game this month **Xecutor**

● A day trip to Sheffield is perhaps not everybody's idea of a good time, but there are those, SU readers amongst them, who regard it as a high spot in their life. At least, that's what we hope Alistair Salmon and Stuart Kendall thought about it anyway. Alistair was the first prize winner in the SU "Send me to Sheffield" Comp, and last month he and Stuart were whisked off to Sheffield on an all expenses paid trip around Gremlin's programming power plant. Cleverly disguised as a rather dingy nightclub, Gremlin's office proved an opportunity to play all of Gremlin's latest goodies and poke about in the works a bit. Congratulatons to Alistair who took home goodie bags chock full of games, T-shirts, mugs, clocks ...





TWTMTW *THAT WAS THE MONTH THAT WAS*

Who ever told you this is the year of the rabbit was seriously deluded. This is the year of the coin-oip.

It's the year when software houses have woken up to the value of a good coin-op game. It's obvious, I suppose, that a game that can induce innocent punters to part with their hard-earned cash must have something going for it. The arcade must be the most intensive test game could be given and it follows, naturally, that a top coin-op will have top play value.

Home computer software firms have taken their time coming round to the idea – it's a good couple of years since Elite released Bomb Jack, **which was one of the first converts. But come around they have. These days no software house of any stature (with the possible exception of Hewson) can afford to go into the Christmas sales battle without a brace of arcade licences under its belt. Just look at the coin-op chart on page 95 to see how many of the current hit consoles are now under licence.**

These licences are auctioned, competition is fierce and the rights for a top conversion can fetch upwards of £100,000. Sega's Out Run **follow-up,** After Burner **was the subject of bids for its micro conversion, before the coin-op had even reached these shores.**

On the face of it this coin-op fever is terrific – now you can play all your favourite arcade games at home.

There's just one thing that bothers me. How can you translate a game that needs eight megabytes of code, and sits in ten thousand pounds of rotating, tilting, panning cabinet, across to a machine with just 128K?

Could it be that Hewson's Exolon **was so well received was because it wasn't trying to be something it could never be?■**

JON RIGLAR'S ZAP CHAT



Whether you're a pumpkin-headed marshmallow-eater who goes around running over innocent people with a lawnmower or a gust of flabby woof-woof, you're bound to find something totally enthralling in this month's controversial little number.

And it doesn't matter where you like *Simple Minds* or not. No siree. Coming up we've got a bumper edition of woppy do-das on Imagine's Game Over, a few tribbles here and there on Hewson's Exolon (with our very own Multiface version for lucky SU readers) and quite a few juicy maps and letters. We've also managed to entice at least two people into letting us loose on their high scores for our all new and totally-swanky High Score Thingy■

I'm quite lucky with my thing and it's seen quite a lot of action recently. Other people are not so happy with theirs, but that's life isn't it? My thing comes from Gremlin Graphics and bounces back quite a bit. So does Ian O'Connor's and Karl Fudge's. The chaps have sent in the ideal map for the pipe maze in

Thing Bounces Back



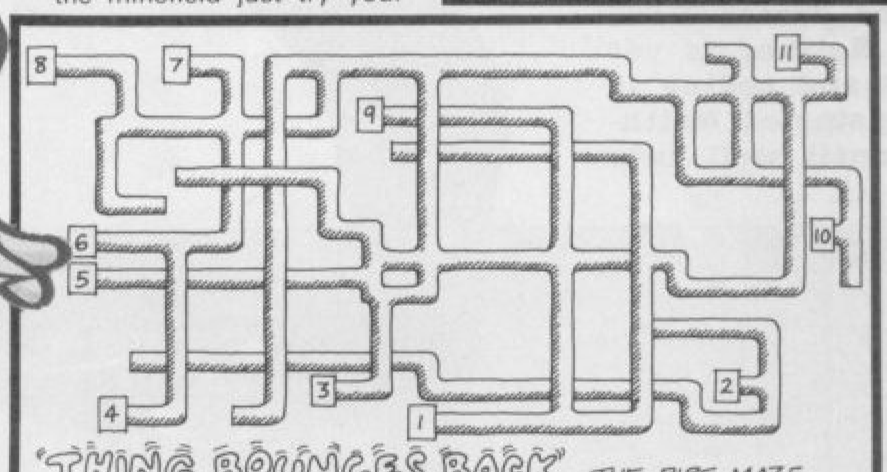
Fudge. Over to the boys:

Use the map to complete the first section. It's not over-difficult when you know where you're going. When you reach the cave, you have to do battle with Barin himself.

Barin can be easily beaten by constantly low-punching him. This should work, but if problems occur, use a few other punches but don't bother kicking him. Once you've beaten Barin, it's time to get into your ground craft which, oddly enough, is on the ground. The best place to fire missiles is in the centre of the screen, then you can move left and right and hit the on-coming guards. When you come to the minefield just try your best to dodge everything which comes towards you. (This may take a bit of practice.)

When Ming finally comes into view blast him to pieces with your laser gun and then run in the opposite direction.

I'm fully prepared to bet my Georgio Armani boxer shorts (on show at the *PCW Show* provided everyone on the staff buys me a pint), my Porsche and Rayban sunglasses, and my surfboard if



And yes. What we 'ave 'ere, like, is another map and some juicy tips for

Flash Gordon

Yet again, like, they come from Ian O'Connor and Karl

Exolon

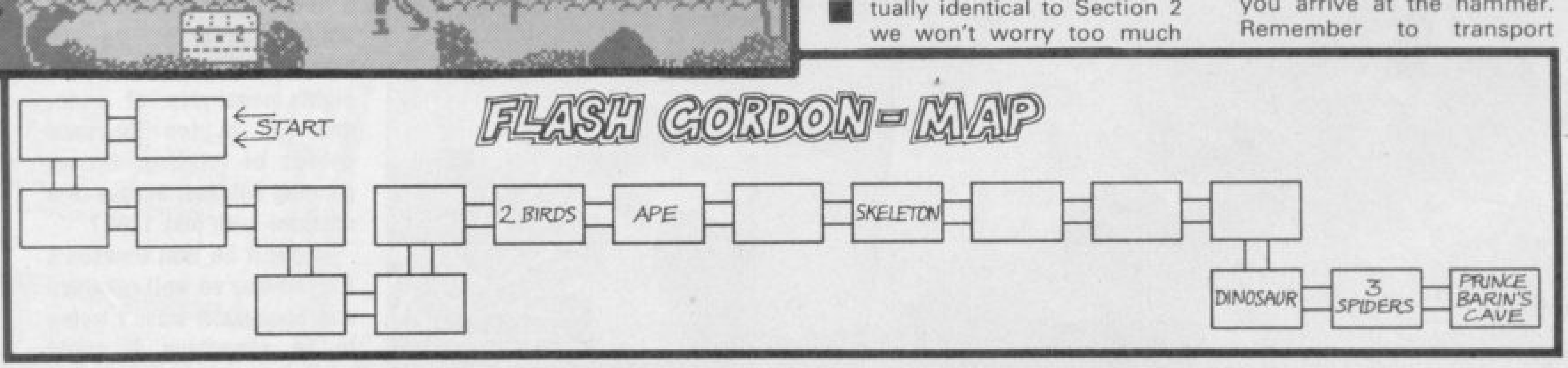
from Hewson isn't a mega-dudley game. No. I don't mean mega-dudley. I must have been warped by the letter from this Adam fella – later this column. I mean *humungous.* And even hairy.

You've all probably gone past at least two whole sections by now, so we'll start off at Section 3. And go through that and four. Seeing as Section 5 is virtually identical to Section 2 we won't worry too much about that, will we?

And here we are in Zone 50 – see last SU's map. And it's tricky. You'll find yourself on top at the far left and below you will be loads of nasty mines. There's also a force field thingy on the far right.

The key here is not to panic. Wait on your ledge and let off a grenade. Stay still as the missile approaches and just as it's about to collide into you, it'll explode. Then make a running jump across to the second platform and then on to the third. Start blasting at the force field. Zone 51 and another missile control as well as some original looking aliens. Moving on into Zones 52 to 60, Zone 52 is a pain until you get past the first teleporter. Don't bother transporting up on to the above ledge. You'll soon see why in Zone 53. Zone 54 has another load of different aliens. These generally bounce around a lot, so shoot them as soon as you possibly can. Zone 55 is quite interesting. Blast the missiles but remember that you havn't got the suit when you arrive at the hammer. Remember to transport





MAP CHAT





Now here's the map for 39 Steps' nifty horror arcade adventure

Bride of Frankenstein.

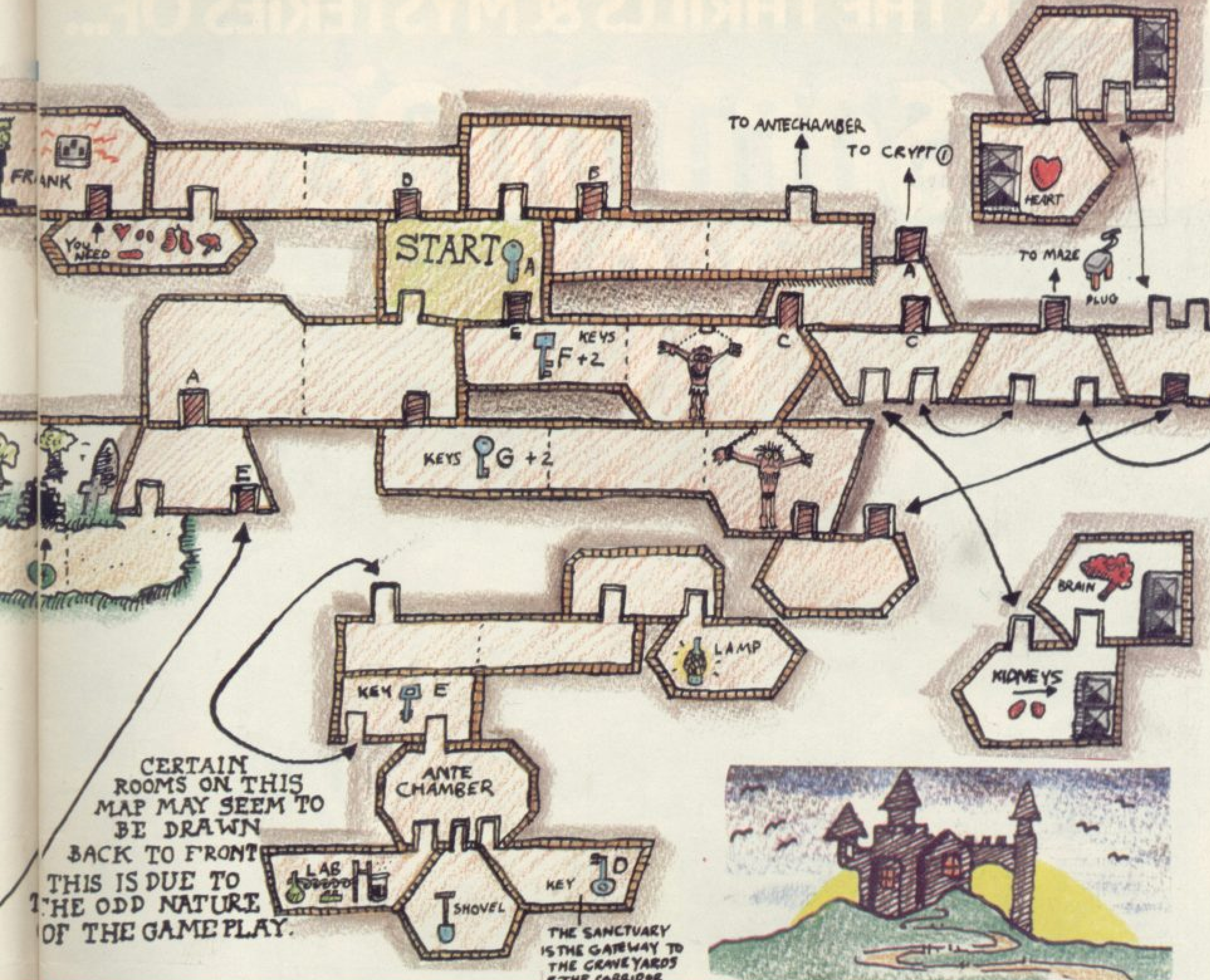
You don't get much help with the game when you start off so the map should be particularly useful. And as for the game itself, it's actually rather good and repays a bit of time spent on it.



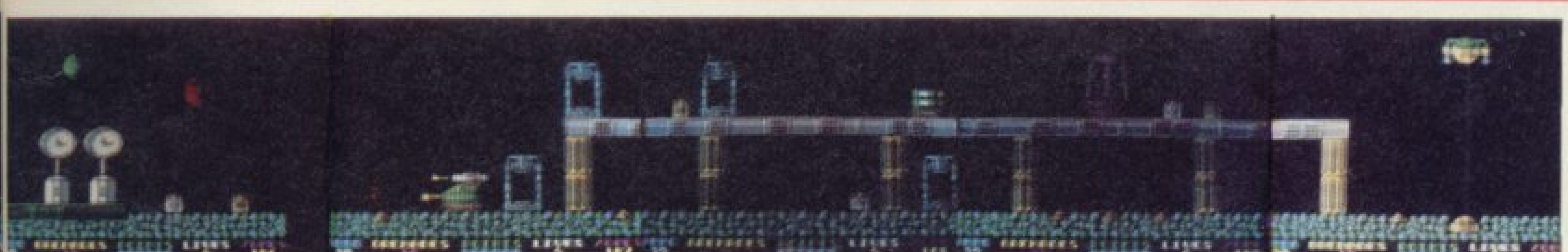


yourself to the high ledge in Zone 56 so that you don't have any nasty surprises in Zone 57. Zone 58 is pretty easy going and Zone 59 is OK as long as you remember to transport yourself upwards and then try to destroy the missile control. Not the other way round. And here we are in Zone 60. And here you can grab yourself the elecrosuit.

From Zones 60 to 65 it's very easy. You can confidently follow the route marked out by the flashing stands and should have no problem. You have a choice of paths in Zone 66 where the lower path is by far the easiest. It's then a fairly easy romp until you come across Zone 72. If you've chosen to take the high path, you'll be in a bit of trouble. It is necessary to flop down to the bottom of the screen and then to grenade a gun emplacement. And the gun tends to let off groups of bullets when you want to drop down. There's also the problem of aliens. They tend to run into your man just as you are about to do anything interesting. Zone 73 is fun. There's a couple of mounds and positioned on top of one is a humungous tank. And it is no good trying to duck its bullets. And then *Fire* and *Fire* until the zone is cleared.

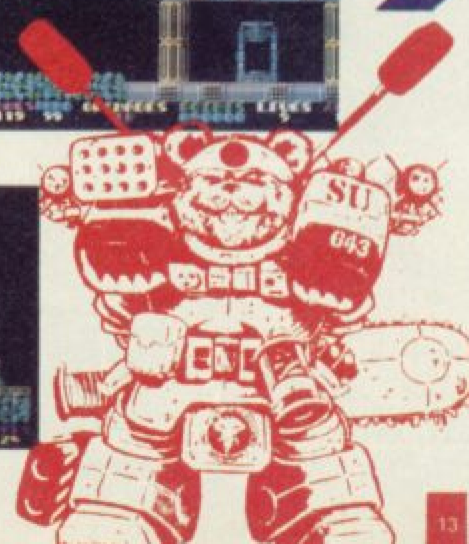


FRANK
YOU NEED
START
TO ANTECHAMBER
TO CRYPT ①
HEART
TO MAZE
PLUG
KEYS F +2
KEYS G +2
BRAIN
KIDNEYS
LAMP
KEY E
ANTE CHAMBER
LAB
SHOVEL
KEY D
THE SANCTUARY IS THE GATEWAY TO THE GRAVEYARDS & THE CORRIDOR
CERTAIN ROOMS ON THIS MAP MAY SEEM TO BE DRAWN BACK TO FRONT THIS IS DUE TO THE ODD NATURE OF THE GAME PLAY.

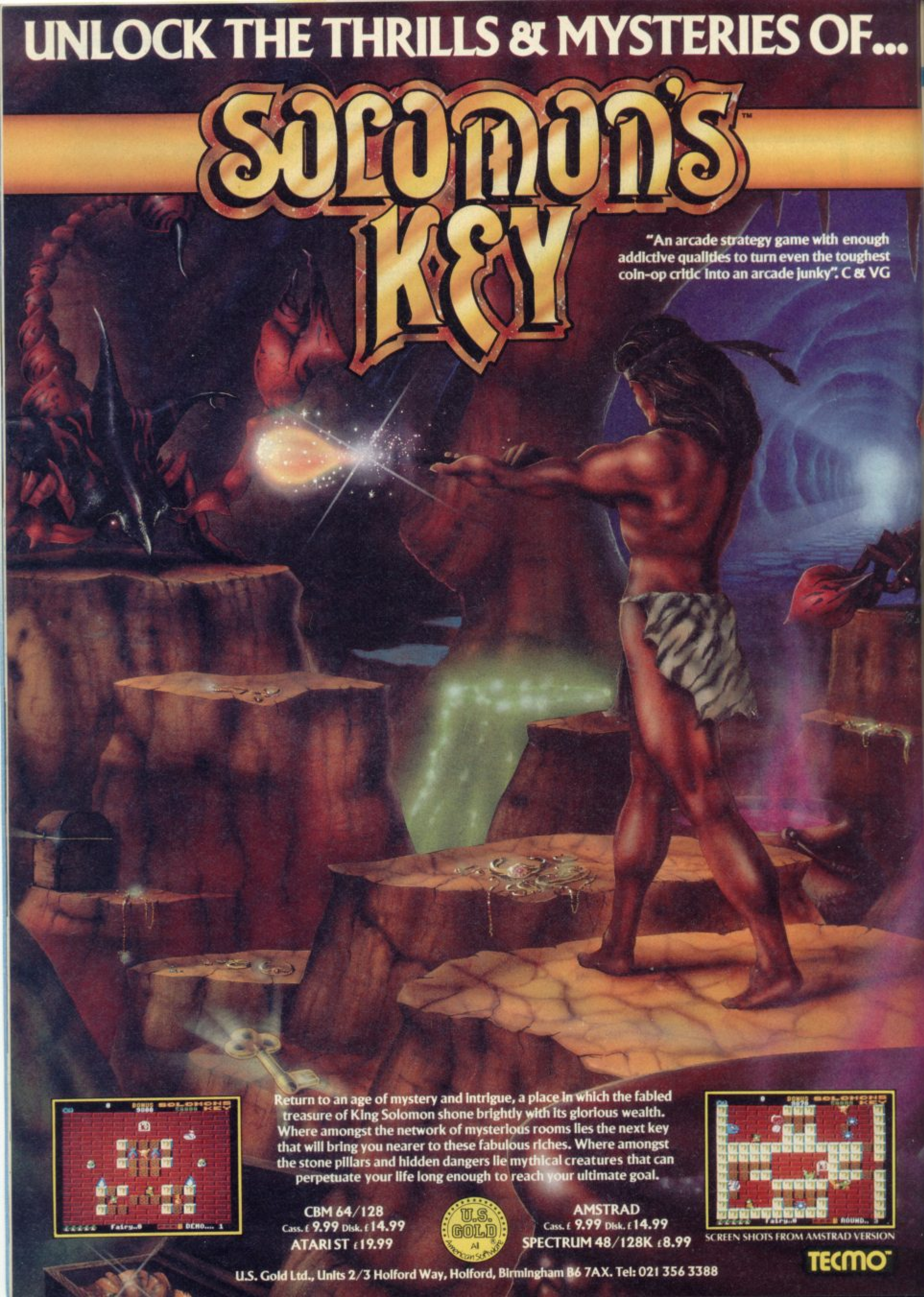








SU

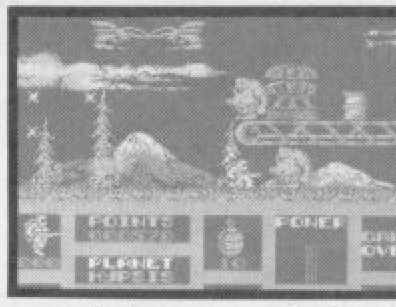

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JON RIGLAR'S ZAP CHAT

'Chop 'n' change' is the motto of this column. None of this boy scout stuff. 'Be prepared' is now soooo unfashionable. Chuck out your Puma trainers and buy a pair of multi-coloured golf shoes. Banish your copy of the *Beano* and rush into Virgin to get the *Viz*. Buy **Exolon** instead of **Transatlantic Balloon Challenge**. That sort of thing. **Exolon** is still tops as far as I'm concerned but Dinamic's latest offering runs a close second. And that's a good reason as any to throw together some humungous tips for

Game Over

It's one of those horizontally scrolly affairs that takes a lost of blasting and bombing. We've put together the definitive map of Section 1, the access code for Section 2, and some useful tips to start you off on Level 2.



Each screen on the map is numbered. Screens one, two and three are fairly basic so I'll skip to four.

This is where the fun really begins. There are two ways in which you can approach this one. a) A humungous hairy dash to the right with the odd panicky jump here or there, or b) a calculated attack on the enemy shooter. This is easier than it looks. The trick is not to shoot the barrel upon entering the screen. Instead jump on top of it and you should then be in direct line with the head of the laser shooter. Then blast. And blast. And blast. After four shots (although it seems to take ages) the shooter's head will drop orf, and it will be rendered well and truly knackered. Now move forward, turn like Don Johnson, and blast the barrel.

The next screen uses just the same tactics except it may be a snogkin more difficult to position Arkos (say that to your gran too loud, and bang goes that wooly jumper she is knitting for you) on to the barrel. Then we're out in the forest. You'll find this screen a bit jampacked. There's the green monsters for a start. Looking like somebody from the Monster Raving Loony Party, they appear from the ground and generally charge at you. The trees play a vital role here. There are two places that the little terrors can appear. And guess what? They appear just behind the trees where we've conveniently printed an arrow. And there are some more alien, in the shape of spacecraft, that appear from the left and fly to the right. You can just about ignore them altogether.

Moving on. Jump a few more centimetres to the right, and you'll come across a rather nasty screen in which a laser shooter lurks just like an angry aquarium man. (Tell you more later). The general idea here is to run like blazes to the right, shooting any greenie that

HUMUNGOUS READER'S BIG FIVE

Geoffrey Fisher from Liverpool

1	Zynaps	Hewson
2	Enduro Racer	Activision
3	Uridium	Hewson
4	Head Over Heels	Ocean
5	Army Moves	Ocean

"**Zynaps** has got to be the best shoot 'em up that's yet been released on the Spectrum," tribbled Geoff, "and the worst game that has ever been let loose on my Spectrum could very well be **They Call Me Trooper** from CRL." Quite so, quite so. Couldn't agree more.

HIGH SCORE THINGY!

So where's all your high scores eh? I received a paltry number this month. So if you've got a high score on any game at all, why not send it in to the ususal address to get it printed and your name. Here's this month's selection:

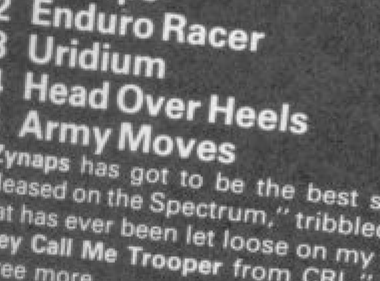
S BURTON	Zynaps	*33,925*
	Arkanoid	*229,230*
	West Bank	*171,210*
S HOBBS	Ad Astra	*134,870*
	Oh Mummy	*4,490*
A McCALLUM	Disco Dan	*1,969*

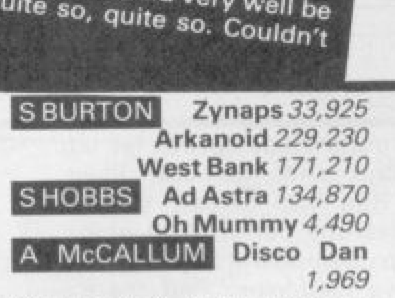
And that's it. Not really very overwhelming is it? I'd appreciate a lot more next month. And you don't *have* to mark on it Bognor Regis Appreciation Fund High Score Chart but if you *really* want to you can.

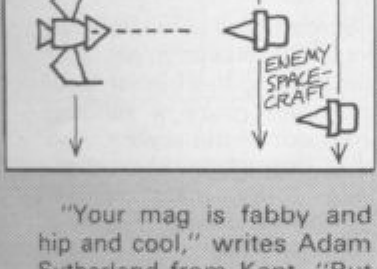
"Your mag is fabby and hip and cool," writes Adam Sutherland from Kent. "But you are not because you're no good at the mega-dudley (that's a new one Jon – Ed)

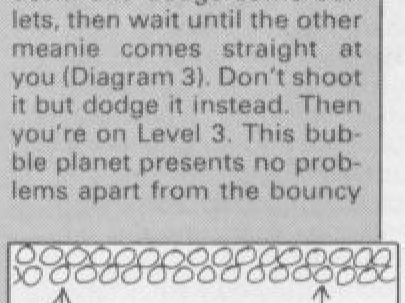
Zynaps

Gorgeous pouting Adam, age 12½, has also sent in his own diagrams. "Seeing as I am mega dudley at it, I'll tell you how to get the meanies at the end of Level 2. Move up and down in sync with the closest meanie while shooting until it swirls around and comes directly at you. (See Diagrams 1 and 2). When it does that go down and dodge some bullets, then wait until the other meanie comes straight at you (Diagram 3). Don't shoot it but dodge it instead. Then you're on Level 3. This bubble planet presents no problems apart from the bouncy things. (Simply stay at the bottom and shoot). The big baddie at the end doesn't go away, so you need to have the targets (Diagram 4)."









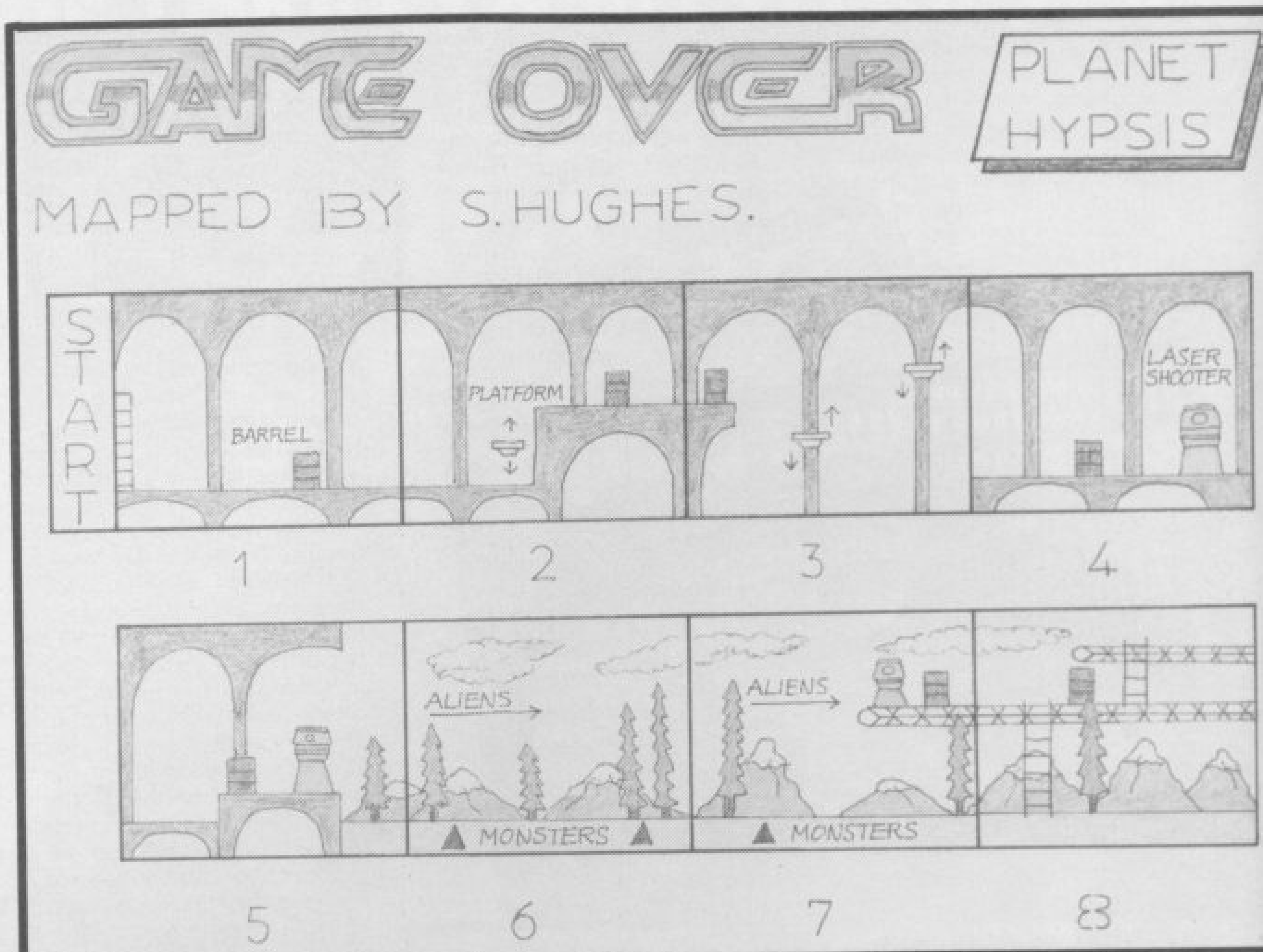
INFORMATION EXCHANGE

● MONEY MONEY MONEY!! Yes. I could do with lots of it. In SU 66 Stewart Saint of Plymouth rather foolishly offered and I shall quote 'a full-blooded tenner' to the person who managed to beat his score of 932,950. And, well I'll be surprised, somebody did. Not just one person in fact. Two. Philip Parker from Leeds claims a massive 1,357,220! And then there's Steven Aspinwall who weighed in at 1,256,000. Oh lummy. Quite how they prove it is another thing.

● An interesting little missive here from Neil Wilcock of Birmingham origin. What we have here is a bug in **Tomahwak**. When you are trying really hard to get through the Lenslok thingie, repeatedly bang the keyboard. A message will appear. 'Dum de sum de dum . . . Frog'. When the program has loaded and you are about to play, press *Enter* and then type TIMBO 1. What does it mean? What is it there for? Things get curiouser and curiouser.

● T'wa only t'other month when I said I wanted lots of fanzines and said I was prepared to print a small plug for the best sent in each month. And just about the best thing to come through the post since my Swatch watch is the summer issue of *EPROM*. Packed into its 48 pages are a slightly overwhelming 21 reviews, news, the odd competition and hints and tips. It's a fully printed, A5 size publication which is well written, nicely designed which tries hard to air its own views although sometimes goes over the top. If you want to get your hands on the autumn issue of *EPROM* which will be available in early September, then you should contact Tony Worall at 328 The Maltings, Penwortham, Preston, Lancs PR1 9FD. It'll cost you 70p. Quite pricey, but worth a look.

JON RIGLAR'S ZAP CHAT



happens to trudge into your path, and enter the next screen. Once here, lob a grenade to clear the platform above you. Sprawly up the ladder and blast the barrel. Forget about the last screen and the barrel that lies within it – it is a waste of energy going back for it. Instead, climb up the adjacent ladder and pulverise the nasties on the highest level. Move on quickly – the longer you stay in one particular screen, the nastier the nasty nasties get. Run along the top platform and into the next screen.

Screen 8. And jolly nice it is too. A bit too much like the last one, but never mind. Blast the barrel, grab its contents and jump off the end of the platform to clear the screen.

Screen 9. More platforms and a hole. Shoot the green monsters as soon as they materialise from the level and when you reach the end of the platform jump in swashbuckling form over the hole.

And what we have here, in true David Bellamy style, is a Giant Orka. And what a humungous thing it is too – it takes up the height of the screen and generally bounces at you, making the whole screen bounce up and down. The easiest way to destroy the thing is to use thousands of grenades – provided you've got any left! The Orka needs forty shots!! Forty shots!! I ask you. Hang around close to the far left edge and lob and blast.

Run into Screen 12 and blast the barrel. Also going up and down happily, are two platforms. And there's more. The friendly green monster is there as well. The hardest part of the whole screen is landing on the first platform. Bob along to the last tree and make a running jump from there. Quite easy really. Watch out for the first platform though – it often disappears from the screen altogether and if you're on board, you'll lose a life. Therefore, as soon as the second platform is in range, jump on to it. From this, you'll need to make another running jump out of the screen to make sure you land on solid ground in Screen 13.

Screen 13 and a small space of ground in the middle. If you forgot to jump from the last screen (harf harf) you'll land in all the wrong place. Dearie me. Blast the barrel and jump on to the ground to the right. Screens 14 and 15 are fairly straightforward – as you'll soon realise. To get to the higher levels in Screen 14, you'll need to run into Screen 15 and then come back. Watch out for the laser shooter. I usually don't bother about eliminating it. Instead climb up the ladder. Make sure you're on the highest level before you re-enter Screen 15 – you can then hop over the end on to Screen 16.

Only four more screens to go. Entering Screen 16, you'll be high up up above everybody else. There will be the occasional green nasty appearing on your level and you should know by now how to deal with them. Careful as you go in Screen 17. You'll have to drop down on to the middle level. It should present no real problem, but if there are a swarm of green monsters on that level, then you'll end up losing lotsa energy as you fall into them. Don't forget to blast the barrel and grab it's contents and also to run back into Screen 16 to get that barrel.

Screen 18 is very similar to Screen 9. Never mind. Just climb up to the higher level and then make a running jump out of the screen. And here, in the final screen, we have three giant robots. Each robot attacks you, and needs 20 shots to be destroyed – so you'll need to use any grenades you have left over.

When you move on into Screen 20, your man will appear and you'll be given the access code for Section 2. And I've got it. By cheating using a disassembler. It's 18024 and this for both 128K and 48K versions.

QUICK TIPS FOR SECTION 2

This is the best part of the game. You'll need to employ strategic tactics to ensure that Arkos doesn't run out of energy. The first thing you'll need to avoid, is the lake. This is in the forest and is

POKE CORNER

This month's Poke is a bit special. It's mega. So mega that it's spelt with a G. Really. If you liked Hewson's **Exolon** (and who doesn't, eh?) then here we present the best way to get infinite lives and infinite ammo. Pretty good eh? There's more to come! We've hacked and hacked and can now give you, the punter, the Special SU Version. Yes indeedy. All the Pokes are for Multiface One and 128 users and are entered normally once you have loaded the game. Let's make that last bit quite clear. Once you have *Loaded* the game. And no. It's no good if you haven't got the game.

Infinite lives:28054,255
Infinite ammo:33646,000

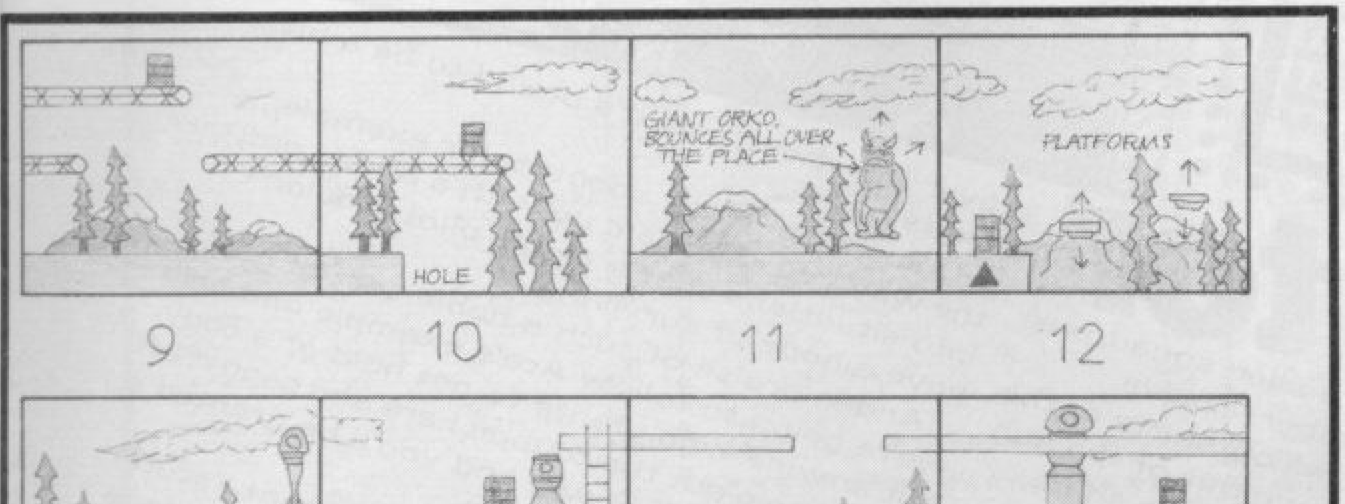
Quick note here fellas. The infinite lives *Poke* will only work after playing one normal game. You will see a strange graphics appear under the lives. And coming up now is the Special SU Version of **Exolon.** (Cue fanfare)

28257,84	28258,72
28259,65	28260,82
28261,071	28262,079
28263,78	28271,72
28272,73	28273,78
28274,68	28288,67
28289,79	28290,78
28291,84	28292,82
28293,79	28294,76
28300,75	28301,65
28302,77	28303,73
28304,75	28305,65
28306,90	28307,65
28309,66	28310,69
28311,65	28312,82
28314,73	28315,83
28317,66	28318,65
28319,68	28320,32
28321,65	28322,71
28323,65	28324,73
28325,78	30380,66
30381,69	30382,65
30383,82	30387,65
30388,82	30389,77
30390,69	30391,68
30396,84	30397,79
30398,32	30399,84
30400,72	30401,69
30404,84	30405,69
30406,69	30407,72
30411,83	30412,85
30413,32	30414,54
30415,55	

denoted by a blue ground. You shouldn't really need to go near the lake at all. Instead climb up the first ladder and return to the previous secreen to collect your extra laser shots. A few screens on, you'll come across a pillar and a bit of a lake. Jump across the lake and then make a running jump when your man is next to the pillar. This way you'll avoid landing on the mine that is cunningly positioned in the next screen. From that point, if you die, your man will start inside the palace.

You should really then go and find the *POW* icon. It's found down the first ladder to the right. You can use this as many times as you like to replenish your energy levels. Another useful icon to be found is the *SHOOT* one, which lies around in more than a few screens. You'll also need to get the force field. From the palace entrance, you should trudge to the right until you reach a lift. Jump in and, once you get to the top, run to the left. (Remember to avoid the mines). And when you reach the far left-hand corner you'll find another lift. Up you go. Then, on the higher level, trudge as far right as you can. All the way, jumping over the gaps. You'll soon see the statue. Its eyes flash when you lob a grenade or shoot at it. Keep doing this and you'll soon have yourself a force field. No idea what you can use if for though. If you happen to die, you'll lose it again and it appears that you can't hit the statue to get another one.

Let's get serious. Oh. OK then. The Afternoon Boys (the people who shift through your letters to choose the Big Eight, readers chart, etc etc) are more than a smidgeon miffed by the drop in post lately. What's happened? Where have you gone? More importantly, can we come too? "It's simply not good enough," said Dennis. So. If you want your cockles



warmed, start flooding us with letters, cheques, pens, colour TVs, Raybans and Jukeboxes. What *WOULD* be a good idea, is to give away a tenner to the best letter, whether it be tips, maps or blackmail photos of members of the staff. So, start licking the stamps.

And that's it for yet another *Zapchat*. In the next ish there's bound to be loads of juicy things but it's too far away to think about for the mo. Seeing as October is the month containing my 18th, I'm almost certainly going to be horizontally polarized for the majority of it, so *Zapchat* should be interesting. Oh, and any cards, presents, cheques etc should be sent to the SU address. Ta!■

ADRIAN SCRUMPWERSTLE

Zapchat Big Eight: Exolon

Hewson's recent little blaster managed to prompt at least twelve high scores. I was surprised to say the least

Name	Postn	Score
M. Lee	1	54,120
J. Cocks	2	43,870
D. Traviss	3	33,234
M. Pope	4	33,128
S. England	5	28,670
J. Sissons	6	25,566
C. Forest	7	24,560
K. Beale	8	20,450

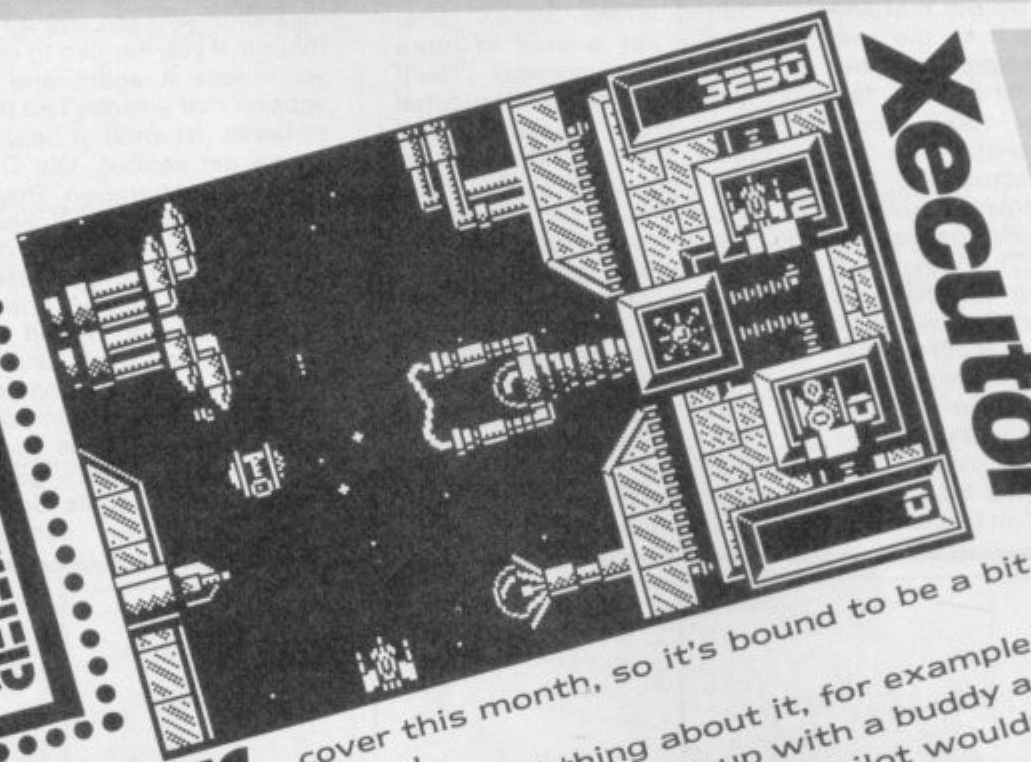
Next month is such a long way away really. By that time, **Game Over** will either be an old classic or an old fuddy duddy. Which is why I've chosen it as next month's challenge. If it's fuddy duddy, I'm sure you'll tell me in the letters page. I look forward to receiving lotsa letters.

£1·00 OFF

SU SMASH OFFER

XECUTOR

Send coupon to: Xecutor Smash Offer, Ace Software, Softek International, 36/38 Southampton Street, London WC2 7HE along with a cheque/postal order for £6.99 made payable to Softek International



Xecutor

OK, you've taken on more alien squadrons than you care to remember. You've overtaken prison ships on the outskirts of the Orion Nebula and you've flown out of the sun hurling laserfire at defenceless cargo ships. All single-handed. Well, now is the time to take on a force so powerful that even a hardened starfighter like yourself couldn't handle alone. Xecutor, from Ace is the finest game we've seen this month (well actually, we though Wizball was fine, too).

Let's face it Xecutor made it on to the SU cover this month, so it's bound to be a bit special.

One special thing about it, for example, is the way you can team up with a buddy and go into situations that a single pilot wouldn't have a hope of surviving.

And in praise of such a noble sort of game, we're going to follow Ace's example and help out anyone who wants to get hold of a copy. Simply snip out the coupon here and send it off to the address shown, and you'll be granted a whole £1.00 off the game.

And if you find it hard to believe that Xecutor is worth £6.45 you're mad. Just look on page 24■

RENEGADE

IT'S great. It's Ocean's superb conversion of the Taito coin-op which was recently widely acclaimed as the most addictive, exciting and downright tricky arcade game for ages.

You take the role of a none-too clean-cut hero, stuck on the streets in an ugly gang brawl. You're completely alone and must face wall after wall of rutherless thugs, hell-bent on giving you a good seeing to. Using combination punches, kicks and some decidedly un-gallant tactics, your only objective is to get out alive.

Yup, Renegade is our kind of game. So we took the nearest Inter City 125 up to Manchester and persuaded the guys at the Big 'O' that it was in their interests to put this very tempting offer your way.

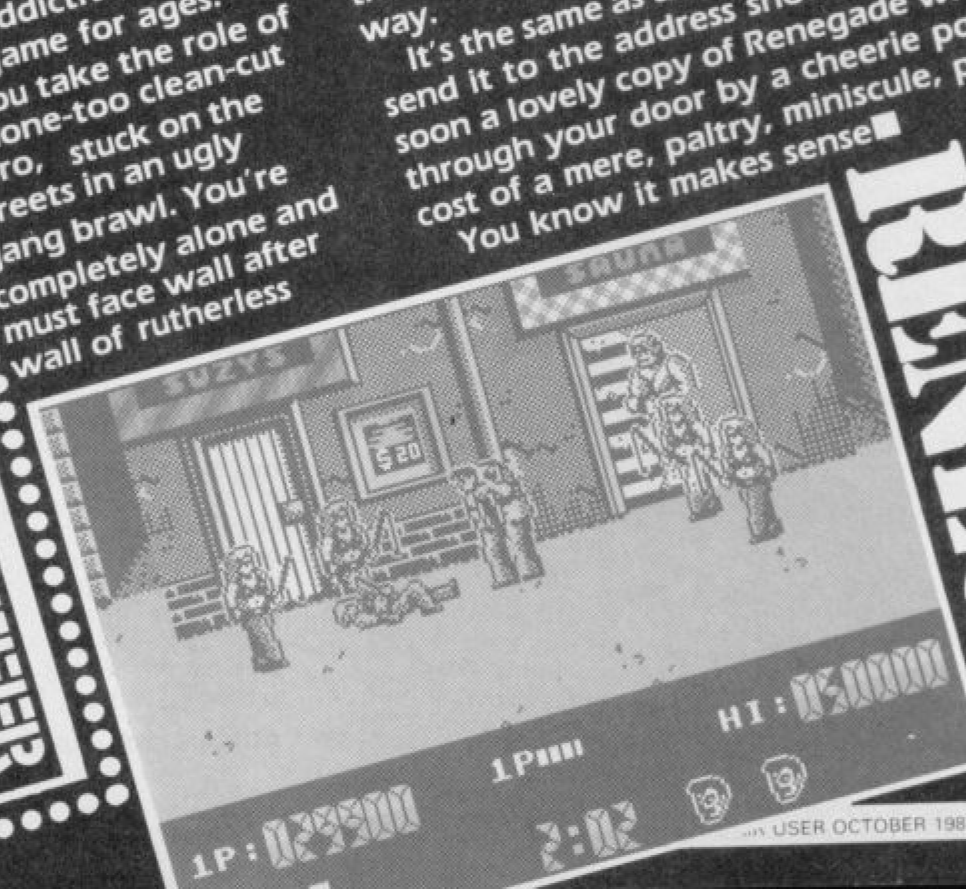
It's the same as usual – snip out the coupon, and send it to the address shown here, and pretty soon a lovely copy of Renegade will be squeezed through your door by a cheerie postie, for the cost of a mere, paltry, miniscule, pathetic, £6.45. You know it makes sense■

£1·50 OFF

SU SMASH OFFER

RENEGADE

Send coupon to: Renegade Smash Offer, Imagine Mail Order, 6 Central Street, Manchester M2 5NS, along with a cheque/postal order for £6.45 made payable to Imagine Software



SMASH OFFER RENEGADE

POKE

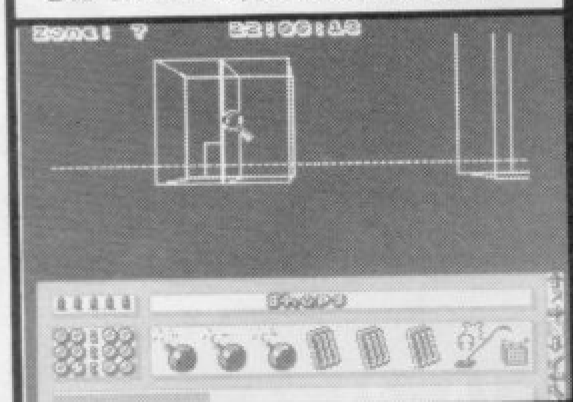
ALL POKES BY . . .



CATCH 23

Type in and **Run** *this listing before loading in the game tape as usual, and you'll be able to select any of the six options shown in the menu*

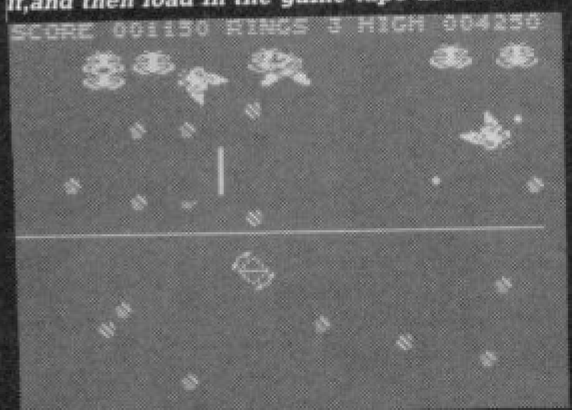
```
   5 RESTORE
   6 LET t=0: LET w=0
  10 FOR f=36610 TO 36760
  15 READ a: POKE f,a
  20 LET t=t+a*w: LET w=w+1
  30 NEXT f
  35 IF t<>1260945 THEN  PRINT "
ERROR IN DATA": STOP
  40 GO SUB 1000
  45 PRINT AT 10,5;"START 'CATCH
 23' TAPE"
  50 LOAD ""CODE
  60 RANDOMIZE USR 36610
 100 DATA 221,33,71,143,6,6,197
 110 DATA 221,110,0,221,102,1
 120 DATA 221,78,2,6,0,17,0,125
 130 DATA 237,176,235,54,201,30
 140 DATA 150,205,0,125,221,35
 150 DATA 221,35,221,35,193,16
 160 DATA 222,33,103,238,17,0
 170 DATA 139,1,0,4,237,176,175
 180 DATA 50,114,142,33,89,143
 190 DATA 17,23,142,1,3,0,237
 200 DATA 176,195,244,141,252
 210 DATA 228,16,12,229,24,74
 220 DATA 229,12,86,229,14,100
 230 DATA 229,25,136,229,11,205
 240 DATA 141,143,62,52,50,221
```



```
 250 DATA 199,62,53,50,195,240
 260 DATA 62,202,50,98,182,62
 270 DATA 202,50,105,182,62,202
 280 DATA 50,88,231,62,58,50
 290 DATA 141,181,62,61,50,221
 300 DATA 182,253,33,58,92,33
 310 DATA 88,39,217,49,158,97
 320 DATA 195,0,91,62,195,50,75
 330 DATA 142,33,92,143,34,76
 340 DATA 142,201
1000 DIM i(6)
1005 PRINT AT 1,0; PAPER 2; INK
7;"CHOOSE YOUR POKES:"
1010 PRINT  INVERSE i(1)'"1 STO
P GAME TIMER"
1020 PRINT  INVERSE i(2)'"2 INFI
NITE BOMBS"
1030 PRINT  INVERSE i(3)'"3 INFI
NITE AMMO"
1040 PRINT  INVERSE i(4)'"4 SOLD
IERS WON'T SHOOT"
1050 PRINT  INVERSE i(5)'"5 NO S
OLDIERS"
1060 PRINT  INVERSE i(6)'"6 TANK
S WON'T FIRE"
1070 PRINT '"7 LOAD GAME"
1080 LET a$=INKEY$
1090 IF a$="" OR a$>"7" OR a$<"1
" THEN  GO TO 1080
1095 LET a=VAL a$
1100 IF a$="7" THEN  CLS : RETUR
N
1105 LET i(a)=1
1110 IF a=1 THEN  POKE 36701,0
1115 IF a=2 THEN  POKE 36706,0
1120 IF a=3 THEN  POKE 36731,0
1125 IF a=4 THEN  POKE 36711,58:
 POKE 36716,58
1130 IF a=5 THEN  POKE 36726,201
1135 IF a=6 THEN  POKE 36721,58
1140 GO TO 1005
```

KILLER RING

This frenetic shoot-out may prove a little tough when you're getting to the later levels. Just as well you can make yourself invincible with this Poke. Type it in, **Run** *it,and then load in the game tape as usual*

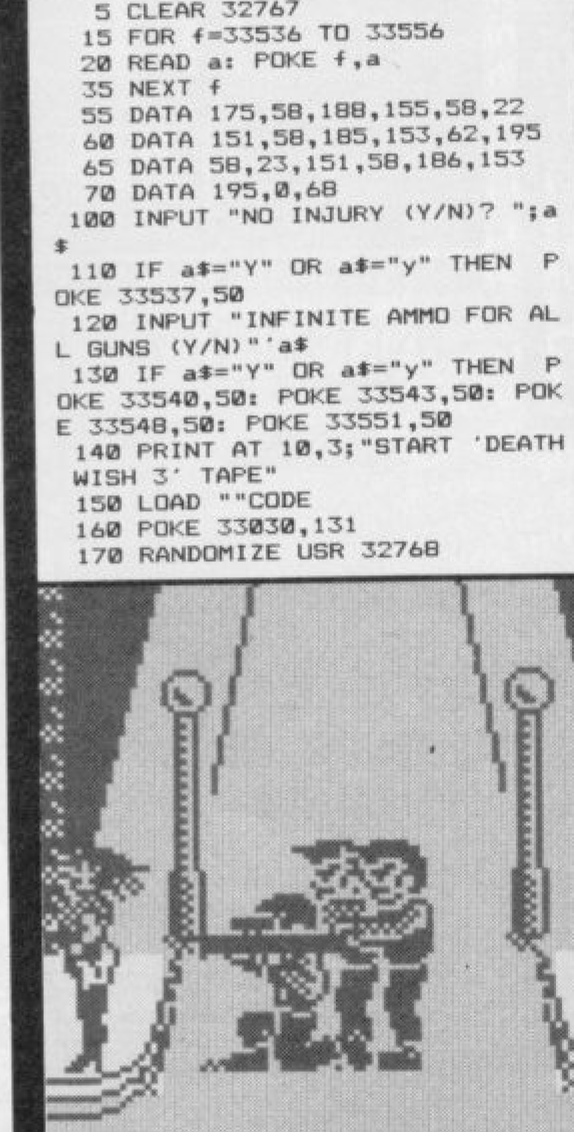



```
  10 PRINT AT 10,4;"START 'KILLE
R RING' TAPE"
  20 LOAD ""CODE
  30 POKE 38881,201
  40 RANDOMIZE USR 32768
```

DEATH WISH III

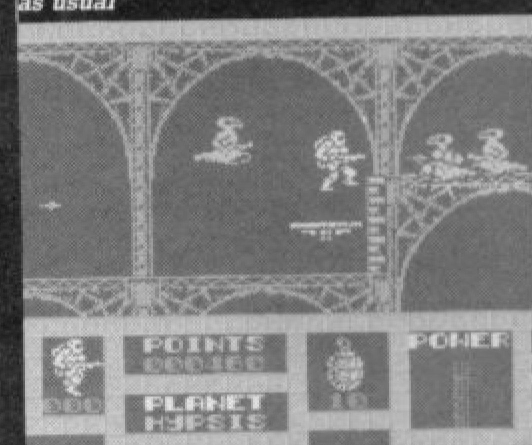
This Poke offers immunity from attack along with unlimited firepower. Type in the Poke and Run it, then load in the game tape as usual

```
   5 CLEAR 32767
  15 FOR f=33536 TO 33556
  20 READ a: POKE f,a
  35 NEXT f
  55 DATA 175,58,188,155,58,22
  60 DATA 151,58,185,153,62,195
  65 DATA 58,23,151,58,186,153
  70 DATA 195,0,68
 100 INPUT "NO INJURY (Y/N)? ";a
$
 110 IF a$="Y" OR a$="y" THEN  P
OKE 33537,50
 120 INPUT "INFINITE AMMO FOR AL
L GUNS (Y/N)"'a$
 130 IF a$="Y" OR a$="y" THEN  P
OKE 33540,50: POKE 33543,50: POK
E 33548,50: POKE 33551,50
 140 PRINT AT 10,3;"START 'DEATH
 WISH 3' TAPE"
 150 LOAD ""CODE
 160 POKE 33030,131
 170 RANDOMIZE USR 32768
```



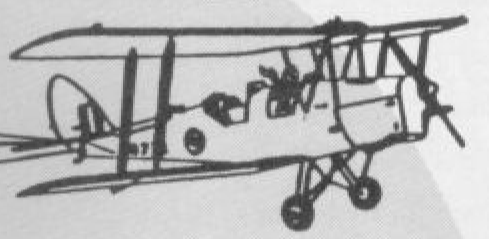
GAME OVER PART 1

Infinite lives, grenades and power are yours with this Poke! Type in the Poke listing, **Run** *it, then load in the game tape as usual*




```
   1 REM GAME OVER Part 1
   2 REM A.SINGH 1987
   3 REM
   4 CLEAR 49151
   5 LET t=0: LET w=0
  10 FOR f=47872 TO 48004
  15 READ a: POKE f,a
  20 LET t=t+a*w: LET w=w+1
  30 NEXT f
  35 IF t<>1036155 THEN  PRINT "
ERROR IN DATA": STOP
  40 PRINT AT 10,1;"START 'GAME
OVER Part 1' TAPE"
  45 LOAD ""CODE
  50 RANDOMIZE USR 47872
 100 DATA 221,33,115,187,6,6,197
 110 DATA 221,110,0,221,102,1
 120 DATA 221,78,2,6,0,17,0,125
 130 DATA 237,176,235,54,201,30
 140 DATA 150,205,0,125,221,35
 150 DATA 221,35,221,35,193,16
 160 DATA 222,33,103,238,17,0
 170 DATA 248,1,0,4,237,176,175
 180 DATA 50,114,251,33,80,187
 190 DATA 17,19,251,1,5,0,237
 200 DATA 176,33,85,187,17,0
 210 DATA 252,1,40,0,237,176
 220 DATA 195,244,250,62,195
 230 DATA 205,0,252,50,75,251
 240 DATA 33,10,252,34,76,251
 250 DATA 201,253,33,58,92,62
 260 DATA 201,50,188,141,175,50
 270 DATA 248,141,50,232,114
 280 DATA 99,195,0,91,192,228
 290 DATA 16,208,228,24,14,229
 300 DATA 12,26,229,14,40,229
 310  DATA 25,76,229,11
```

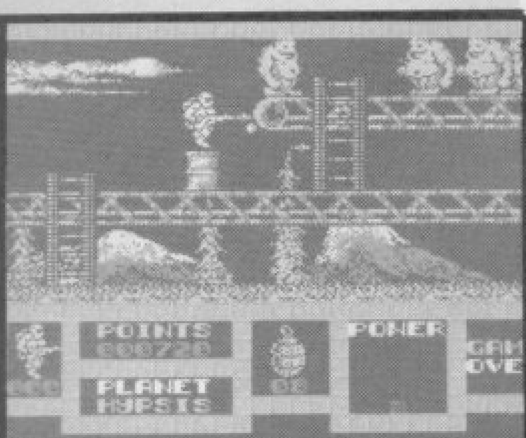
CITY



ADRIAN SINGH

You said you wanted more Pokes. So here they are! And they're the best you can get (that means they work...) all presented in an easy to use form. No messing around with machine-code, and funny bits of hardware. Instead it couldn't be simpler. Just type in the Poke listing as an ordinary Basic program, *Run* it, and then load in your game tape just as usual. All Pokes are by Adrian Singh■

● A number of you have sent in requests for us to Poke particular games. We're only too happy to oblige, but since there are so many games we obviously can't Poke them all. So if you want us to Poke a particular game write in and we'll do so for the ones that get the most, votes. Send your requests – together with your name and address – to Poke City, SU, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU



GAME OVER PART 2

The same again, but you're also immune from the mines. Follow the same procedure – type in and Run the listing, then load in the game tape

```
  1 REM GAME OVER Part 2
  2 REM A.SINGH 1987
  3 REM
  4 CLEAR 49151
  5 LET t=0: LET w=0
 10 FOR f=47872 TO 48006
 15 READ a: POKE f,a
 20 LET t=t+a*w: LET w=w+1
 30 NEXT f
 35 IF t<>1044446 THEN  PRINT "
ERROR IN DATA": STOP
 40 PRINT AT 10,1;"START 'GAME
OVER Part 2' TAPE"
 45 LOAD ""CODE
 50 RANDOMIZE USR 47872
100 DATA 221,33,117,187,6,6,197
110 DATA 221,110,0,221,102,1
120 DATA 221,78,2,6,0,17,0,125
130 DATA 237,176,235,54,201,30
140 DATA 150,205,0,125,221,35
150 DATA 221,35,221,35,193,16
160 DATA 222,33,103,238,17,0
170 DATA 248,1,0,4,237,176,175
180 DATA 50,114,251,33,80,187
190 DATA 17,19,251,1,5,0,237
200 DATA 176,33,85,187,17,0
210 DATA 252,1,40,0,237,176
220 DATA 195,244,250,62,195
230 DATA 205,0,252,50,75,251
240 DATA 33,10,252,34,76,251
250 DATA 201,253,33,58,92,62
260 DATA 201,50,250,118,50,60
270 DATA 139,175,50,194,114
280 DATA 50,120,139,195,0,91
290 DATA 192,228,16,208,228
300 DATA 24,14,229,12,26,229
310 DATA 14,40,229,25,76,229,11
```

WIZ

Type in the Poke here Run it, and load in the game tape as usual. Then you'll be endowed with infinite firepower as well as an unlimited supply of runes

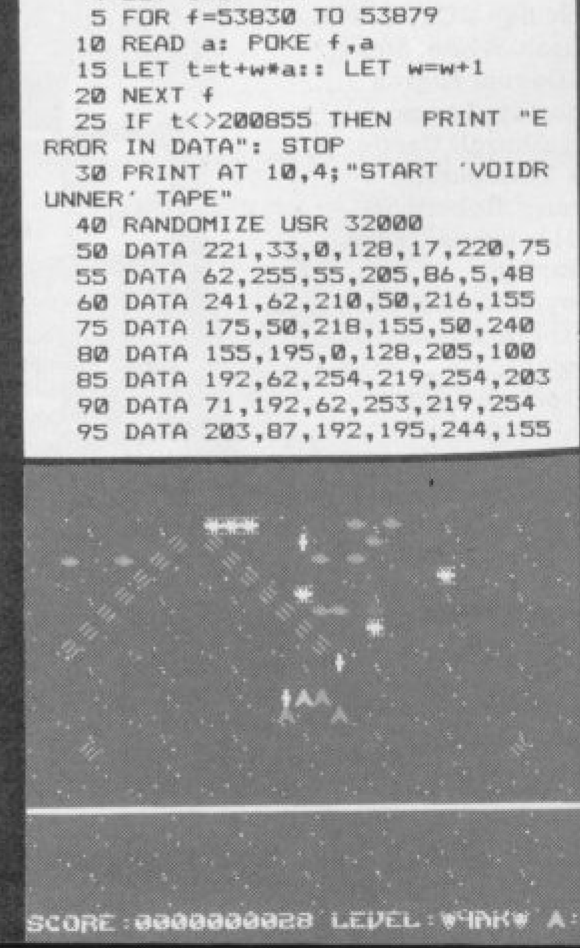


```
  5 BORDER 0: PAPER 0: INK 7
 10 CLEAR 24999
 20 PRINT AT 10,5;"START 'WIZ'
GAME TAPE"
 25 LOAD ""SCREEN$
 30 LOAD ""CODE : LOAD ""CODE
 40 INPUT "INFINITE POWER (Y/N)
>";a$
 45 IF a$<>"y" AND a$<>"Y" THEN
GO TO 60
 50 POKE 60305,0
 60 INPUT "INFINITE RUNES (Y/N)
>";a$
 65 IF a$<>"y" AND a$<>"Y" THEN
GO TO 100
 70 POKE 64355,0: POKE 64218,0
 80 POKE 64279,0: POKE 64399,0
100 RANDOMIZE USR 59000
```

VOIDRUNNER

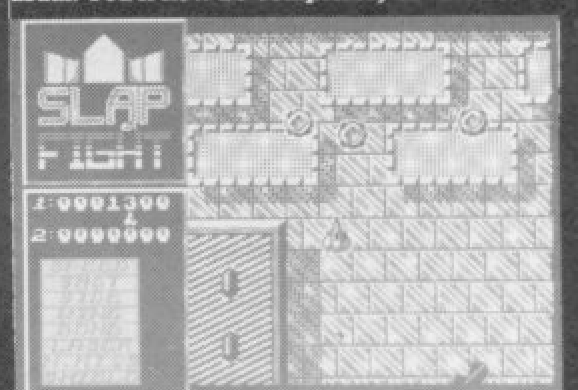
Type in the listing and Run it. Then load in the game tape as usual. Now you'll be invincible

```
  4 LET t=0: LET w=0
  5 FOR f=53830 TO 53879
 10 READ a: POKE f,a
 15 LET t=t+w*a:: LET w=w+1
 20 NEXT f
 25 IF t<>200855 THEN  PRINT "E
RROR IN DATA": STOP
 30 PRINT AT 10,4;"START 'VOIDR
UNNER' TAPE"
 40 RANDOMIZE USR 32000
 50 DATA 221,33,0,128,17,220,75
 55 DATA 62,255,55,205,86,5,48
 60 DATA 241,62,210,50,216,155
 75 DATA 175,50,218,155,50,240
 80 DATA 155,195,0,128,205,100
 85 DATA 192,62,254,219,254,203
 90 DATA 71,192,62,253,219,254
 95 DATA 203,87,192,195,244,155
```



SLAPFIGHT

When the going gets tough in Ocean's coin-op conversion, type in this Poke and Run it. Then load in the game tape as usual. You'll now be completely invincible




```
  4 CLEAR 49151
  5 LET t=0: LET w=0
 10 FOR f=47872 TO 47999
 15 READ a: POKE f,a
 20 LET t=t+a*w: LET w=w+1
 30 NEXT f
 35 IF t<>961251 THEN  PRINT "E
RROR IN DATA": STOP
 40 PRINT AT 10,4;"START 'SLAP
FIGHT' TAPE"
 45 LOAD ""CODE
 50 RANDOMIZE USR 47872
100 DATA 221,33,110,187,6,6,197
110 DATA 221,110,0,221,102,1
120 DATA 221,78,2,6,0,17,0,125
130 DATA 237,176,235,54,201,30
140 DATA 150,205,0,125,221,35
150 DATA 221,35,221,35,193,16
160 DATA 222,33,103,238,17,0
170 DATA 248,1,0,4,237,176,175
180 DATA 50,114,251,33,80,187
190 DATA 17,19,251,1,5,0,237
200 DATA 176,33,85,187,17,42
210 DATA 251,1,25,0,237,176
220 DATA 195,244,250,62,195
230 DATA 205,42,251,50,75,251
240 DATA 33,52,251,34,76,251
250 DATA 201,253,33,58,92,62
260 DATA 201,50,87,223,49,191
270 DATA 99,195,16,189,193,228
280 DATA 16,209,228,24,15,229
290 DATA 12,27,229,14,41,229
300 DATA 25,77,229,11
```

COMPETITION WINNERS

ARMY MOVES JEEP COMPO

Well here they are! The results of the wildly successful, Wild Willy radio controlled jeep compo.

And the winner is... Paul Clarke of Basildon, Essex, who gets to drive away the amazing four-wheel drive monster...

Not only that but also... here are the one hundred runners up who receive posters, sports bags, T-shirts and copies of Ocean's *Army Moves.* Here're the names and what they get:

Ocean Sports Bags, **winging on their way to the following 20 winners:**

Ross Higgins, St Eval, Wadebridge, Cornwall; Gabriel Leong, Cox Green, Maidenhead, Berks; J Klass, Chessington, Surrey; Samer Kurdi, Amman, Jordan; James Horwood, Pyenest, Halifax; G Rhodes, 7th Signal Regt, BFPO 15; Stephen Watson, Nether Heyford, Northampton; Warren Grace, Paignton, Devon; Steve Clements, Feltham, Middx; Nicholas Palmer, Cheslyn Hay, Walsall, West Midlands; Jason Dean, Willenhall, West Midlands; K Man, St Albans, Herts; Edward Ballard, Burgess Hill, West Sussex; Richard McLean, Annan, Dumfriesshire, Scotland; Andrew Howe, Arbroath, Angus; Sam Pavey, Sidcup, Kent; Steve Garrett, Brighton, East Sussex; Veelaert Yves, Antwerp, Belgium; Matthrew McPherson, Woodford Halse, Near Daventry, Northants; Julian Watt, Maidstone, Kent.

A copy of Oceans Army Moves game **to these thirty winners:**

Craig Woodcock, Acocks Green, Birmingham 27; Rob George, Wigston Fields, Leicester; Stephen Alder, Ebley near Stroud, Glos; Wayne Johnson, Sheffield; Peter Brown, Chesterfield; Michael Grove, RAF Laarbruch, BFPO 43; Andrew Ostler, Peterborough; Steve Unwin, Peterborough; Jason Starksfield, Gt Baddow, Chelmsford, Essex; Mark Smith, Luton, Beds; Stuart Rook, Bingley, West Yorks; Chris White, New Basford, Nottingham; Paul Keenan, Hatfield, Doncaster, South Yorks; Gard Abrahamsen, N-6092 Eggesbones, Norway; Timothy Fowle, Wymondham, Norfolk; B Thain, Port Glasgow, Inverclyude; J N Philby, Caerleon Newport, Gwent; Paul Luckett, Rochdale, Lancs; Stephen Coppack, Connah's Quay, Deeside, Clwyd; Stuart Moody, Shirley, Southampton; A Rowlands, Briton Ferry Neath, West Glamorgan; Alivn Punter, Haringate, London; David MacKenzie, Chesterton, Newcastle, Staffs; P Smith, Nottingham; Jake Roberts, Reading, Berks; Jeremy Wilson, Nether Heyford, Northants; Johann Ledger, Lambton Village, Washington, Tyne & Wear; Lee Brittain, Giffnock, Glasgow; Richard Thompson, Stoneclugh, Radcliffe; A Kelsey, Cheriton, Folkstone, Kent.

Ocean T-shirts **for these 20 winners:**

Daniel Colman, Chesterton, Cambridge; Michael Kemp, 4204 LL Gorinchem, The Netherlands; Matt Wgener, Pinner, Middx; David Mercer, Calderstones; Paul Boon, Teddington, Middx; G J Hooton, Abingdon, Oxon; Trevor Clinch, Swanley, Kent; Mark Littlewood, Kendal, Cumbria; Per Odegard, N-2200 Kongsvinger, Norway; Paul Day, Bourton-on-the-Water, near Cheltenham, Glos; R Bullivant, 54 Sqn RCT, BFPO 22; W Simpson-White, Stoke, Plymouth, Devon; Kieran Barker, Chorley, Lancs; David Coe, Church Castle, near Great Yarmouth, Norfolk; Stuart Robertson, Glasgow G11; Kevin Teece, Cheltenham; John McGladdery, Comber, Co Down, Northern Ireland; M Turbett, Omagh, Co Tyrone, Northern Ireland; Leighton Blakemore, Aughton, Sheffield; P S Noble, New Malden, Surrey.

And, finally, Army Moves posters **– in incredible full colour – to these 30 winners:**

Pierloot Francis, 6553 Hantes-Wiheries; W Brownless, Peterlee, Co Durham; Christian Conrey, Northumberland; Richard Gunn, Brackley, Northants; Kenneth Tierney, Clakston, Glasgow; Colin Thompson, Lenzie, Glasgow; N Kettlewell, Moordown, Bournemouth; A Parker, Whitchurch, Cardiff; Grigoriadis Theodosis, Thessaloniki, Greece; A Baldwin, Stainton Grove, Barnard Castle, Co Durham; Laurence Ward, Welwyn Garden City, Herts; W Tumelty, Stocksbridge, Sheffield; Andrew Pitt, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire; David Hodgson, Shildon, Co Durham; Kwokwa Lee, Briton Ferry, Neath, South Wales; Barry Jones, Beverley, North Humberside; M Ricketts, Shrivenham, Swindon, Wilts; Mark Abbs, Woodthorpe, York; Shaun Hill, Caversham, Kent; Hanson Fernandes, Hayes, Middx; Mark Middleditch, Bassett, Southampton; David Bruder, Ranelagh Gardens, London SW6; Alastair Hodgkinson, Rainhill, Prescot, Merseyside; Wai-Lam Li, Custom House, London E16; L Davidson, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire; Robert Stather, Rotherham, South Yorks; Rafel Mata, 3130 Soure, Portugal; Mark Quick, Flackwell Heath, Bucks; Duncan Hardy, Stalham, Norwich; B Smith, Middlesbrough, Cleveland■

PAWN

It was the competition they said we shouldn't run! It was too risky, people would be shocked, the establishment wouldn't stand for it!

But then they realised it was **Pawn**ography and not the other stuff and they let us do it anyway.

And you entered it by the trillions! (Well, quite a few). And eleven people are going to be **Pawn**-ing it up with the goodies that they won in this, SU's must daring competition of all time.

The main prize goes to:

J Norman, Roath, Cardiff, who takes an Alice in Wonderland Chess Set.

And Stephen Allison, Stockton on Tees, Cleveland, Brian Stewart, Scunthorpe, South Humberside, L Lee, mid-Glamorgan, South Wales, Neil Smith, Brentwood, Essex, Nigel Gregory, Stockport, Cheshire, all get copies of Rainbird's **Pawn** and an ordinary chess set.

Not to mention Aaron Martins, Bushey, Herts, K P Smith, Haverfordwest, Dyfed, Jeremy Carter, Crowborough, East Sussex, R E Jepson, Sheffield and Timothy Hewitt, Bristol, who all get copies of the game

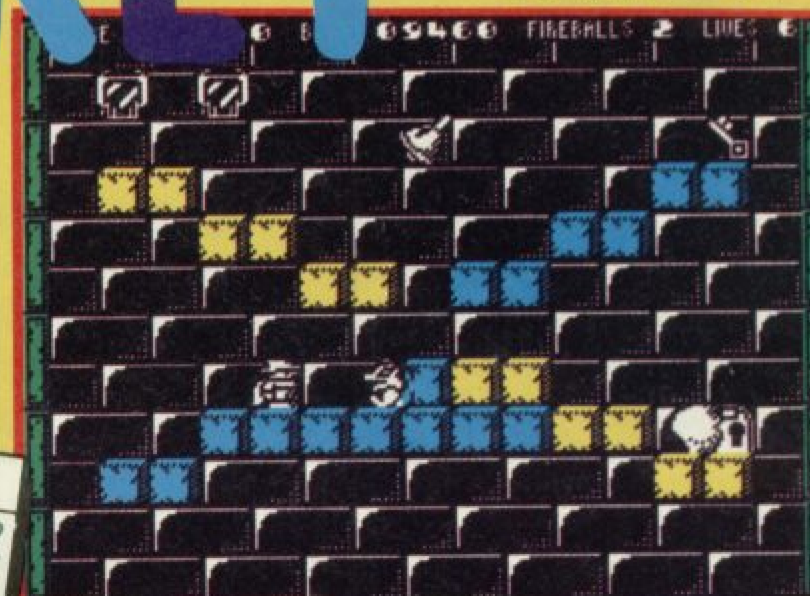
SENTINEL

You wanna be well dressed? The envy of the neighbourhood?
Well unless yer name's here now boy, you're too late.
Yoh. Last June-time, we ran a competition, and it was Peculiar with a capital P. (I said a capital P schmuch!)
The prizes were twenny Sentinel badges from Firebird. Here's the winners, and soon the twenny coolest people in town:
Lloyd Russell, Bognor Regis, West Sussex; Steve Mitchen, Nettleham Park, Lincoln; Stephen Telfer, Lympstone, Devon; David Risbridger, RAF Wyton, Huntingdon; Christopher Smith, Denton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Jane Webb, Aylesbury, Bucks; Gordon Brown, Hamilton, Lanarkshire; Chris Lavery, Burgess Hill West Sussex; J J Herman, Audenshaw, Manchester; Ashley Harrison, Mansfield, Notts; Gary Courtney, Shipston-on-Stour; Ian Harrison, Llandudno, Gwynedd; Kevin Johnson, Liverpool, Merseyside; James Boucher, Peterborough, Cambs; Andrew Strickland, Bournemouth, Dorset; Nicholas Hudson, Undercliffe, Bradford,; J Green, Blackley, Manchester; Danile Myers, Seaham, Co Durham and Ross McInnes, East Lothian, Scotland

Solomon's Key

ARCADE REVIEW





This year's **Boulderdash** methinks. **Solomon's Key** has similar appeal.

The art of it is as much thought as speedy response (although you need plenty of both).

And the game is both mind numbingly simple and very addictive.

Where **Boulderdash** had boulders **Solomon's Key** has blocks. Blocks that may be destroyed by a well aimed head-butt or created out of nothing.

The game idea: from the bottom of the screen your little man has to climb up using blocks as stepping stones – building as he goes – to reach an exit at the top of the screen. The whole thing is under the clock - the quicker you do it the more points you get and – also – on the way there are bonus items to be collected for even more points and a key to be found to open the exit to the next level.

To begin with the problem is time – just choosing sensible routes, learning the art of manipulating the blocks and getting the key within the time limit. After two or three goes you get the hang of it and the first screen becomes comparatively simple. On later levels though, things get more difficult. Assorted creatures start to wander around the blocks – you either have to dodge them or destroy them by collapsing a block from under them at a key moment.

There are firebomb bonuses to help which mean you can wipe out on-coming aliens when the going get really tough and other peculiar objects scattered around each screen which bump up your score by mysterious amounts.

As you progress it gets very, very difficult indeed.

It took me ages to figure out how to do the second screen – you hardly have time to think before what appears to be a fire-breathing fox and disembodied head hurtle down the screen at you.

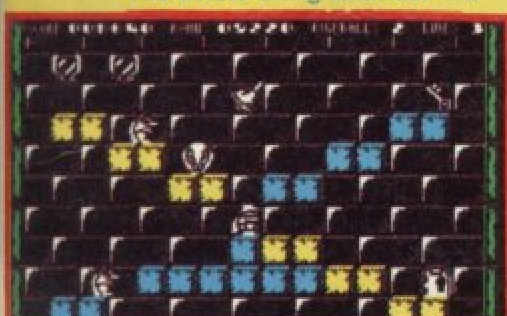
The programming is excellent. True there isn't really anything very difficult involved – nice attribute grid-shaped objects and not too many moving objects – but nevertheless the end result is really colourful, smooth and fast.

The only significant criticism I can make is that, like adventure games, once you've found the solution to a level that's it.

After trial and error I cracked Level 1 so that I could always achieve a time bonus of more than 7000 – and the level soon became merely an irritating obstacle on the way to Level 2 which I hadn't yet cracked.

A 'choose your start level' option would have been much appreciated. A small point, though.

Generally the game is wonderful, it may be simple but could well be a seriously big hit■



FACTS BOX

Simple idea but a superb game in Boulderdash style. Good conversion from Probe, too. A hit methinks

SOLOMON'S KEY
Label: US Gold
Author: Probe
Price: £8.99
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K

Reviewer: Graham Taylor

★★★★★★★★☆☆ 8

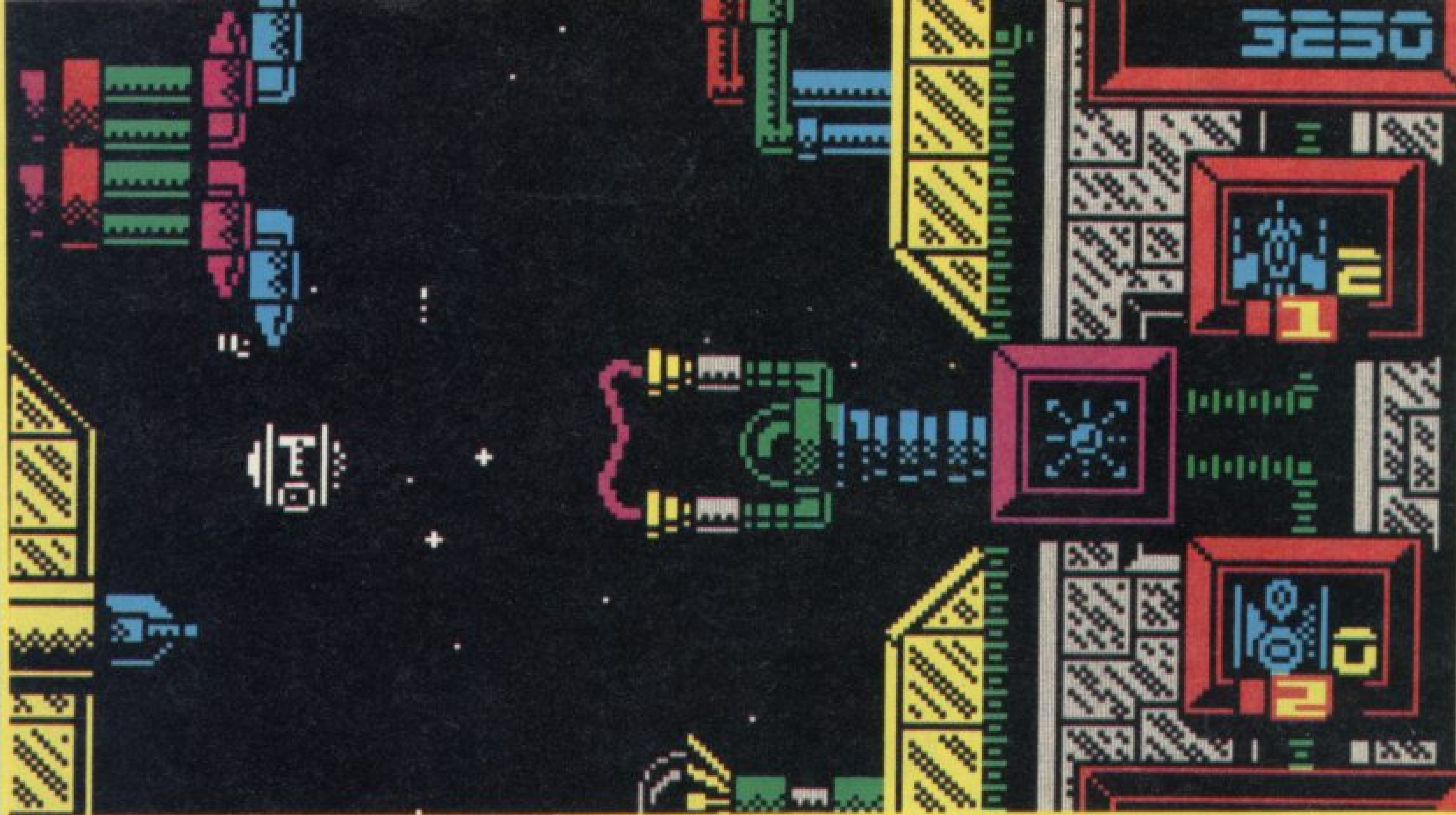
SU has always rated software out of five. Five was great and One was awful. It served us well enough but just recently we've been getting games that fall between the cracks in our star rating. We figured there ought to be a bit more flexibility so guess what?

From now on our star ratings will be out of ten. This means that a classic now automatically gets ten stars and one star is just as much of a dodo as before if not more so.

SOFTWARE STAR RATINGS

ARCADE REVIEW · TOOL-KIT REVIEW · WORK-OUT REVIEW · STRATEGY SIMULATION REVIEW · ADVENTURE REVIEW

★	Avoid this game under all circumstances
★★	Poor and/or massively overpriced
★★★	Dull and uninteresting, if not actually awful
★★★★	Fairly average. Nothing to get excited about
★★★★★	OK but nothing special
★★★★★★	Not bad, some good points. See before you buy
★★★★★★★	Pretty good. We were quite impressed. Worth a look
★★★★★★★★	Good stuff. Well worth the money
★★★★★★★★★	Very good indeed. A must buy
★★★★★★★★★★	Brilliant. Must buy at all costs
Classic	The best program of its type we've seen to date



XECU

Want to know one sign of a really brilliant game? The reviewer has to be dragged away from it to write the review.

And **Xecutor** is one such magnetic game.

It's a shoot-'em up from Ace, a new label which is basically The Edge doing arcade games.

Xecutor is also about the only thing that is going to give **Zynaps** any sort of competition.

There is no plot worth discussing in the game. It's about firing fast and dodging faster, about precision control of your space fighter and instant reflexes. That's the basic requirements of any arcade game but, like **Zynaps** before it, **Xecutor** is also a blinding technical achievement. It looks great and plays even better.

Comparisons with **Zynaps** are inevitable though unfair in some respects since **Xecutor** has plenty of features which are uniquely its own.

It scrolls from top to bottom – like **Lightforce** – and features a variant on what is rapidly becoming this season's big trend – namely firepower bonuses. This is where your ship begins the game armed with only a rickety old laser which splutters fairly uselessly at the bad guys, but where collecting bonus points can win you more serious weaponry.

In **Xecutor** you can graduate from intermittent laser beam to double speed to double barrel to torpedoes to spray-fire, 360° blasts and so on.

You can get to be pretty mean.

To begin with the aliens sweep moderately slowly across the screen – the problem is not so much avoiding them or the bullets they occassionally drop, but actually killing them all.

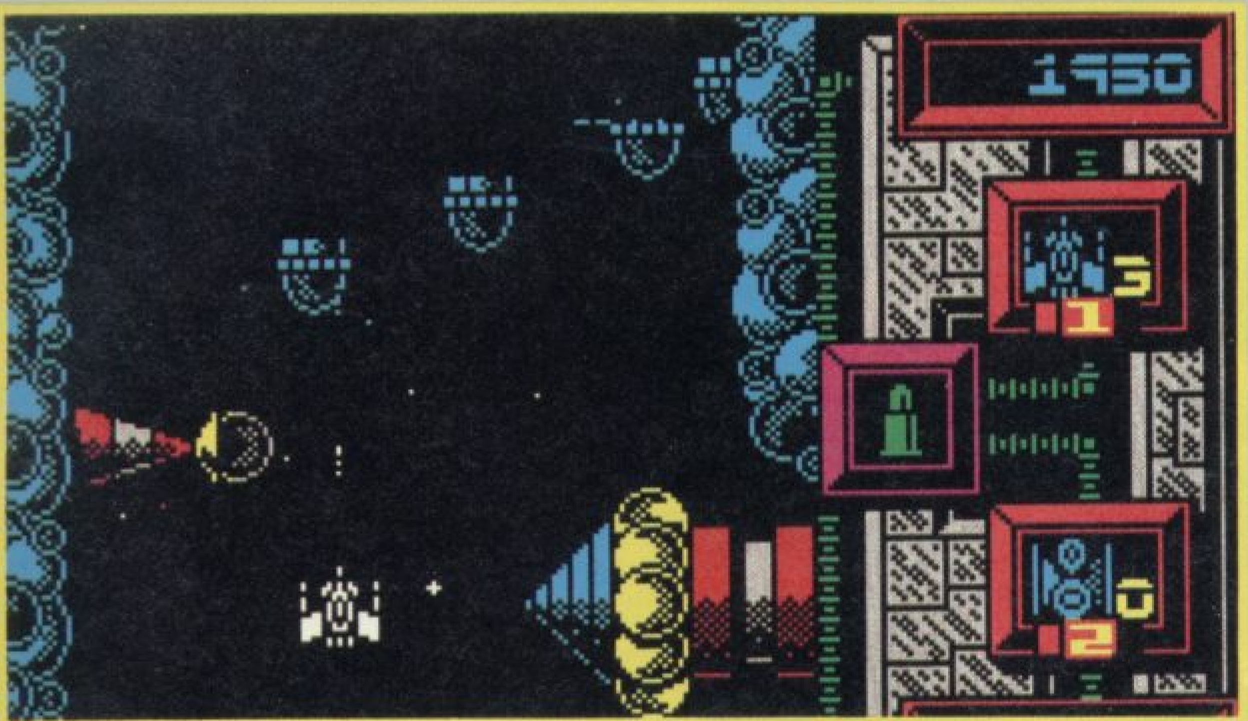
It is only by wiping out a complete wave of aliens that you get a bonus symbol and this is the only way you have of surviving later waves. Basically if you don't wipe out all the first wave of aliens you might as well just forget it . . .

The bonus system works in an interesting way. If the bonus star comes up on screen you can either collect it – by flying over it – or shoot it.

Collecting it gives you the current level of firepower – as indicated by an icon on the right-hand side of the screen – and sets the icon back to zero.

On the other hand you can simply shoot the bonus star – this doesn't change your firepower but instead advances the weapon select icon. Thus in **Xecutor** you have to constantly decide whether to take the weapons on offer or to take a





chance on getting something more dangerous the next time you clear a wave.

One thing is certain, if you want to acquire meaningful points in this game you are going to need, at the very least, photon torpedoes because at the end of the level you get The Big Alien.

The Big Alien which reappears in many guises throughout the game spits out bullets and needs to be hit dozens of times before it turns into a fighter and chases you around the screen. If you manage to blast it then, and only then, do you get to Stage 2. The destruction of the big alien is pretty spectacular. Bits of metal come spinning off at all directions as it disintegrates only to reform as a fighter. Fabulous stuff.

Graphically **Xecutor** is more than you could hope for. Large coloured sprites, smooth scrolling, inventive details, the lot. Whatever happened to attribute clash? **Xecutor** has never heard of it.

If the quality of Spectrum software gets any higher people will start trading in their STs! ■

SINCLAIR USER CLASSIC

TOR

FACTS BOX

Superb vertically scrolling arcade bash-em-up. Fiendish gameplay, large multi-coloured graphics and a two-player option!

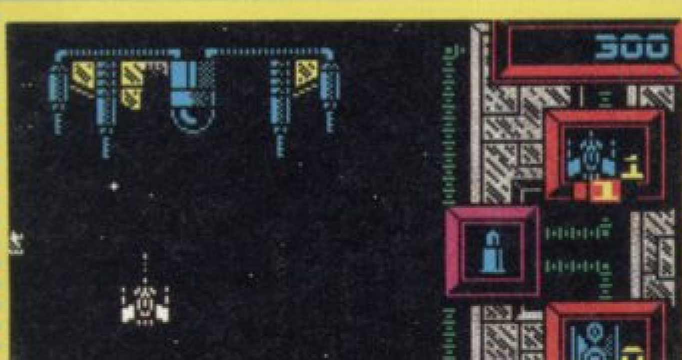
XECUTOR
Label: Ace
Author: Cybadyne
Price: £7.99
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K

Reviewer: Graham Taylor

★★★★★ ★★★★★ 10

TWO-PLAYER OPTION

Xecutor also features an unusual two-player option. When selected this allows two people to play at once controlling two space fighters on screen at the same time. Although essentially you are both fighting the computer you can decide to play either in consort or in competition. For example you could both try to help clear the screen of aliens for extra bonuses and share bonus weaponry evenly or you can try to 'steal' bonuses and generally try to get each other killed. Virtually every joystick and keyboard permutation you can imagine is offered on the move control screen to make it as easy as possible for two people to control two ships without ending up in a jumble of fingers and joysticks leads







PROGRAMMERS

Xecutor is the work of **Cybadyne** which is Mike Smith (right) and Christian Urquart (left).

CHRISTIAN URQUART did the coding. Christian is well known for a number of previous games, mostly for his work for Ocean.

SOFTOGRAPHY: **Daley Thompson's Decathalon** (*Ocean*, 1984), **Hunchback** (*Ocean*, 1985), **Robot Mesiah** (*Alphabatim*, 1985), **Gunrunner** (*Hewson*, 1987)

MIKE SMITH contributed the excellent graphics



πr^2

Let's face it, πr^2 from Mind Games doesn't start off too well, what with being called after an exceedingly boring mathematical equation and all.

The plot doesn't make it sound much better either. Apparently you've got to chase through your mind assembling equations you need to give a lecture, avoiding distracting thoughts and keeping up your IQ. Worse! There's books to collect. And calculators too!!

All of which is a tad off-putting, and that's a shame. Because, lurking somewhere under this unpromising exterior is actually quite a playable little game.

Your mind – which forms the playing area – is portrayed as a series of interlocking cog wheels whirling in space (not unconvincing, you may think). Each wheel spins at a different speed and your on-screen persona, represented by a smiley face, moves around the rims of the wheels, using three control keys to move either clockwise or anticlockwise or to jump from wheel to wheel where the rims touch. (By the way, don't bother trying to use a joystick – the game crashes if you have a Kempston interface connected.)

On each level you are shown the equation which you have to assemble by collecting the pieces in order. Moving all the way around a wheel automatically collects the piece it contains.

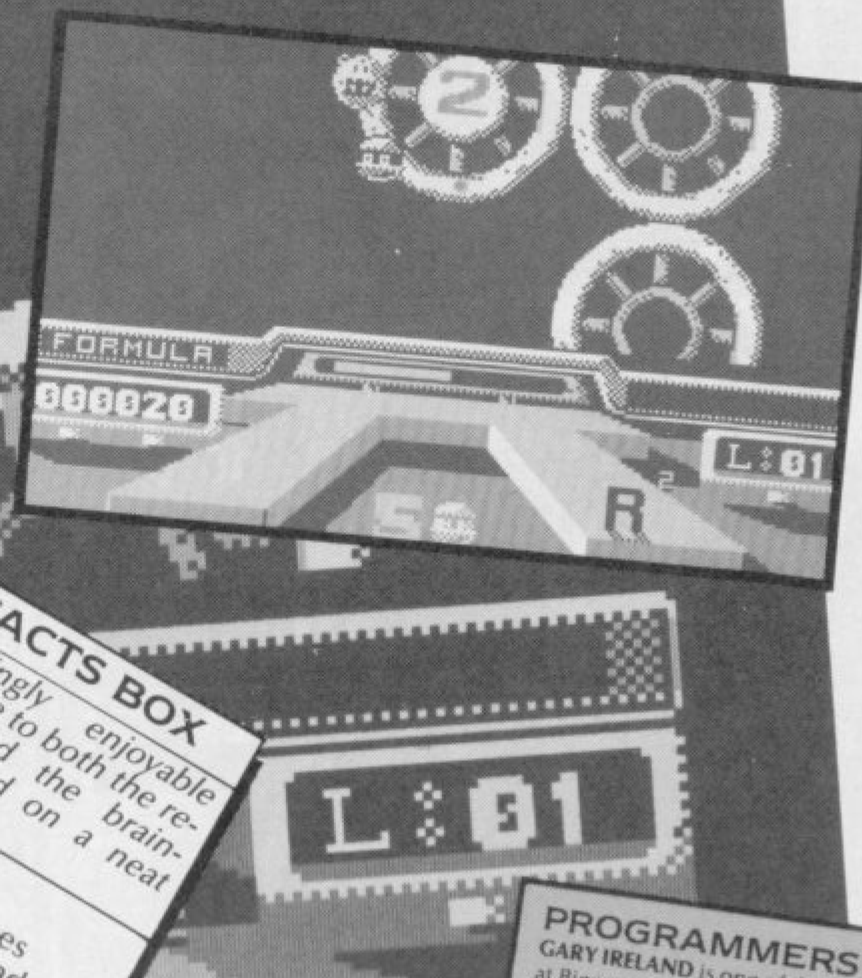
To make it more difficult there are stray thought-bubbles, out to drain your IQ, some moving in set patterns, some randomly, and some homing in on you.

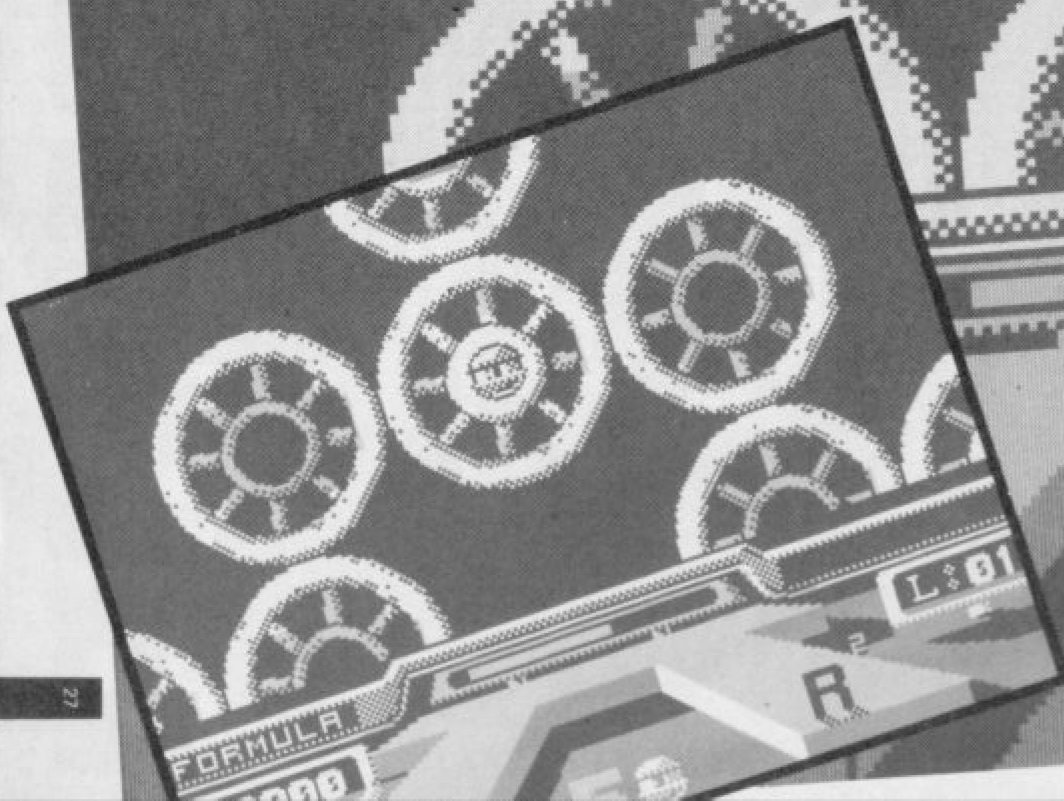
Collecting books and calculators increases your speed and IQ, while hammers allow you to stomp stray thoughts. Fond memories such as ice-cream cones, and abstract ones represented by molecules, cause your IQ to drop – reach zero and you become either a moron (or an *Eastenders* fan).

It's the gameplay – mainly the way you move – which makes the game so neat.

Slick animation and screen-flipping, great music and an original and maddeningly addictive scenario make πr^2 a surprise hit.

I was all set to hate it from the description on the insert, but I had second thoughts...■





FACTS BOX

Surprisingly enjoyable challenge to both the reflexes and the brain-cells. Based on a neat game idea

πr^2
Label: Mind Games
Author: Gary Ireland
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: none

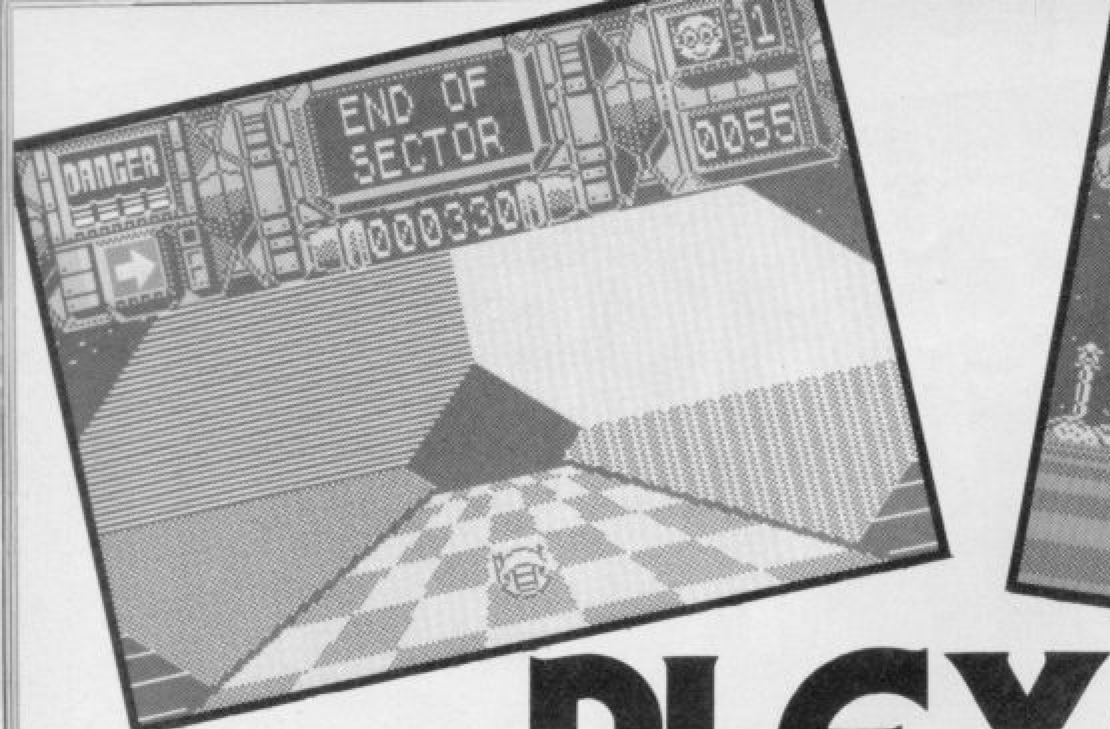
Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

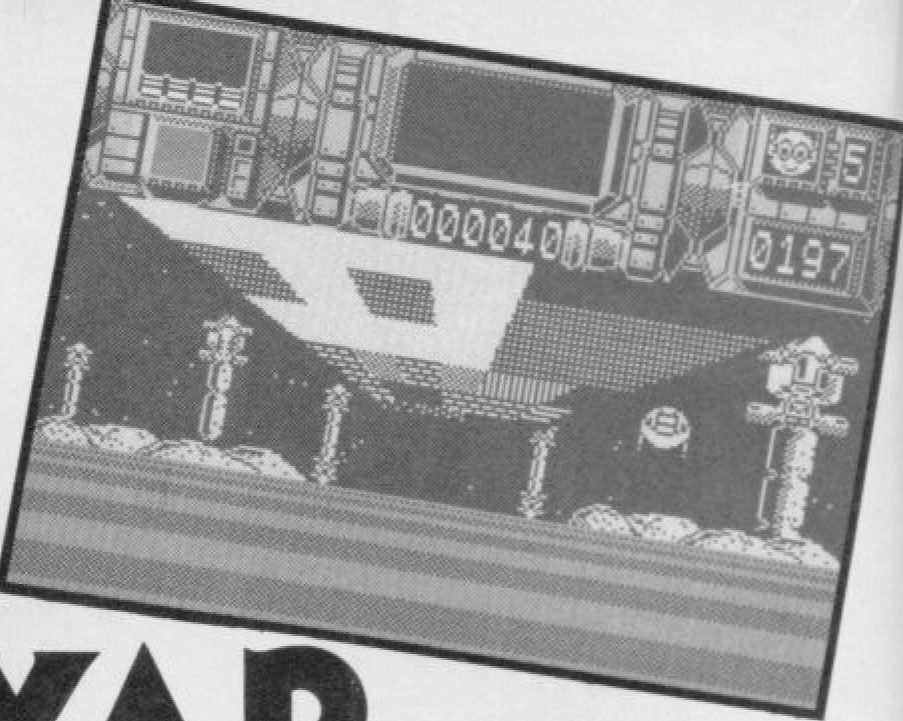
★★★★☆
★★★☆☆

7

PROGRAMMERS

GARY IRELAND is one of the team at Binary Design, the people who produced the classic **Zub** for Mastertronic. He both designed and programmed **πr^2**.
SOFTOGRAPHY: **Glass** (Amstrad version, *Quicksilva*, 1985) **Timetrax** (Amstrad version, *Quicksilva*, 1986), **Rastascan** (*Masteronic*, 1987).





PLEXAR

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away there lived a thriving young planet called Plexar. On this planet an earlier civilisation had constructed a series of crystal roads between the 16 continents. The highways were long, beautiful and probably very useful but the Plexarions wouldn't use them because they thought they were magical.

Once a year, though, they would send a candidate to travel the roads in homage to their god and this year it's you. (Really? What a surprise.)

So what's the game about? That's easy – it's just like Gremlin's earlier **Trailblazer** only cheaper and with more features.

One way or another you are moving a ball along a pathway which scrolls out from the horizon. The exact gameplay varies over the levels but, like **Trailblazer,** the pathway is divided into a quilt of rectangles distinguished by shading. Some of these squares may be harmless bounced over. Diagonally striped ones transport you along the path - others even give you a little helicopter with which to zoom over obstacles. Other squares send you hurtling in the wrong direction, black squares with

FACTS BOX

A fun little 'avoid this, jump over that and pick up the other' platform game. Worth getting for 2 sovs

HEIST 2012
Label: Firebird
Author: Lee Dowthwaite
Price: £1.99
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K

Reviewer: Tony Dillon

★★★★☆
★★★★☆ 8

HEIST 2012

Have you ever noticed how in all the gangster movies the baddies always have a Swiss bank account. Well, in the year 2012 everyone has a Swiss bank account. So, bigger banks are made. The largest being LD International United Bank (I wonder what LD stands for, eh Lee?)

This bank is so big that even its employees don't know their way around. You play a poor computer engineer who gets the idea into his (or her) head that he (or she) is going to break into the bank, hack into the computer and make lotsa dough.

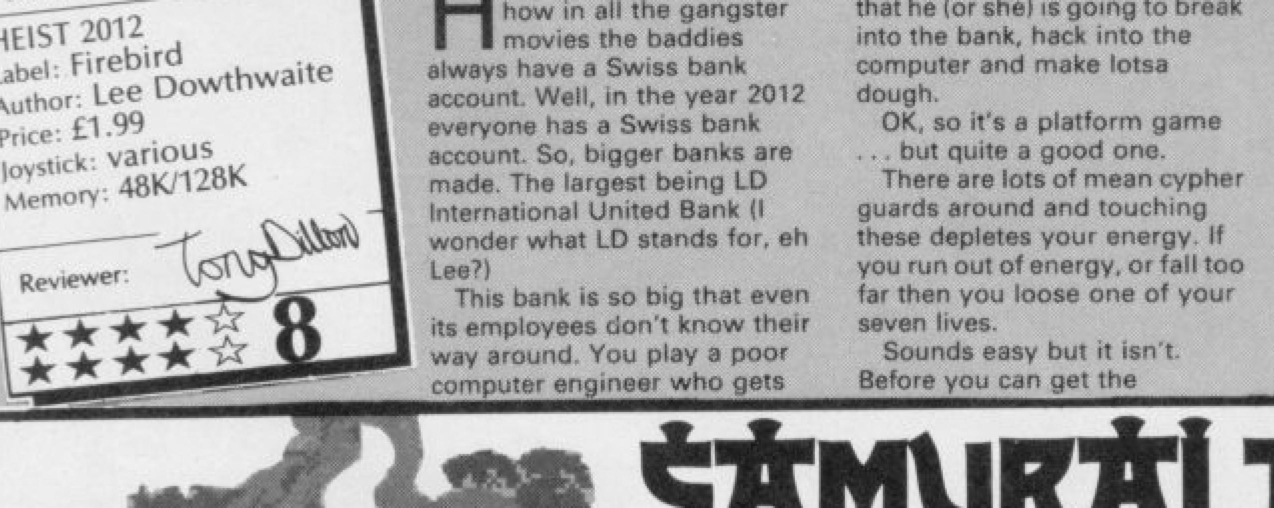
OK, so it's a platform game . . . but quite a good one.

There are lots of mean cypher guards around and touching these depletes your energy. If you run out of energy, or fall too far then you loose one of your seven lives.

Sounds easy but it isn't. Before you can get the password to enter the bank computer, you have to find a key to open the safes which each contain a letter of the password. When you have all the letters you must then find the computer room, enter the password and take the elevator to the next level.

Heist 2012 is an old idea rewritten in a superb way. The animation of the main character is a delight to watch and the screens are taxing but not too difficult to solve■

SAMURAI TRILOGY



If you're going to have another bash at a chop-'n'-slash combat game, the only way to make it attractive is to make sure that it's bigger, faster and more violent than any of the other fifteen thousand on the market.

Samurai Trilogy from Gremlin succeeds on count one but not on the other two, which are probably more important.

Indeed one of the most annoying aspects of the game is that it's multiload, with each stage of your progress as a ninja assassin having to be loaded from tape separately.

The worst bit, though, is that the steelhard warriors look about as threatening as a flock of sheep. Although the backgrounds are nice, there's no real sense of skill or speed in the movements of the characters. ,

Before starting you have to go through all sorts of character definition routines, when all you really want is to get chopping. You can select which form of training you prefer – Makihara, Kihon, Ibuki and so on – allocate five fighting points between your skill, speed, stamina and strength – first in attack, then in defence, and finally choose your opponent.

The problem is that whoever

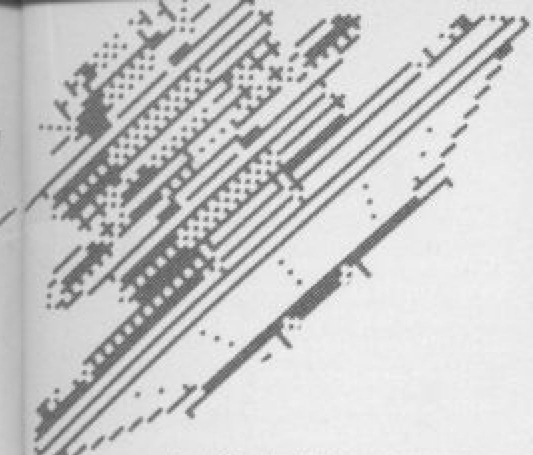
FACTS BOX

Some good ideas, but not good enough to compete with the many better martial arts games on the market

SAMURAI TRILOGY
Label: Gremlin Graphics
Author: inhouse
Price: £7.99
Memory: 48K/128K (multi-load)
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★☆☆
★★☆☆☆ 5



ARCADE REVIEW

small white dots bounce you an extra square in the direction you're moving and then there are enormous black gaps in the track . . . Also robots roam the paths and have to be avoided, or they sap your energy.

In each continent you have three types of road to traverse. In the first you can only control left/right movement as you continuously move forward along the 3D paths. The third, however, is a vertically scrolling 2D landscape.

In all three levels, different squares have different effects.

Terrific stuff. I'm off now to get a T-shirt with 'I love Plexar' written on it. So will you, it'll keep you returning for more for weeks to come■

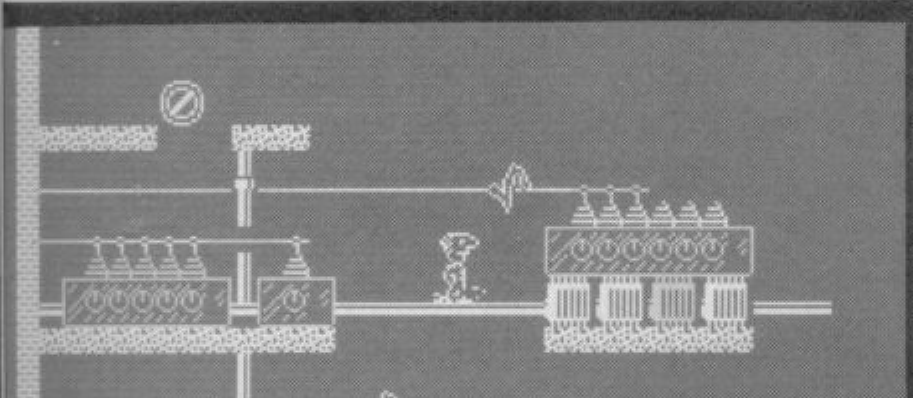
FACTS BOX

Trailblazer style arrives on budget thanks to MAD. In the top ten budget releases so far this year

PLEXAR
Label: Mastertronic
Author: Paul Hargreaves
Price: £2.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Tony Dillon

★★★★☆ ★★★★☆ 8

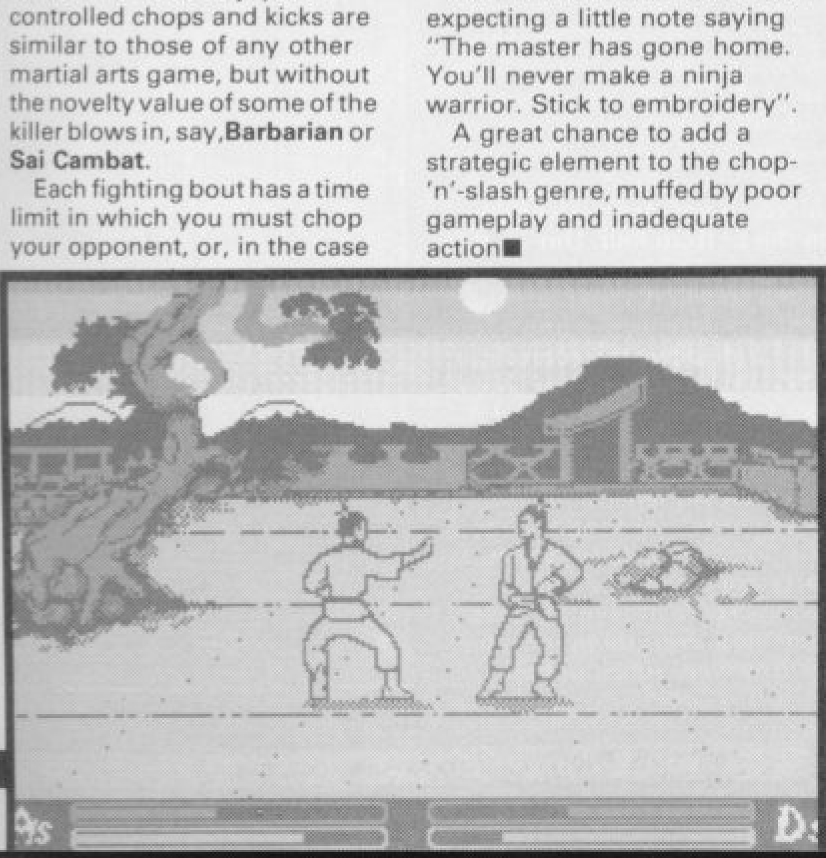


you choose, they all look very much the same and fight the same. The various joystick controlled chops and kicks are similar to those of any other martial arts game, but without the novelty value of some of the killer blows in, say, **Barbarian** or **Sai Cambat**.

Each fighting bout has a time limit in which you must chop your opponent, or, in the case of the later levels, kick or batter him.

So dull is the action that I was expecting a little note saying "The master has gone home. You'll never make a ninja warrior. Stick to embroidery".

A great chance to add a strategic element to the chop-'n'-slash genre, muffed by poor gameplay and inadequate action■



TWILIGHT

TANTALUS

ARCADE Label: **Bug Byte** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Good in its time, now it's even better as a re-release. Quite a smart blast and well worth digging out

Punks rool OK. and we all know what punks hate the most don't we (no not Maxie Bygraves), yes that's right. They hate deviants and they've just found out that there's one left. So off goes Spike the Mutoid who's mission it is to travel through the anti-matter curtain and kill the deviant. He takes with him six weapons. (Oh no, not Nemesis again.) As I was saying, he takes with him six weapons: normal left/right bullets, left/right lasers, up/down bullets, bouncing bombs, random direction bullets and invisibility shields. Cor grandad, thassalot innit! Still, it's all necessary because the playing area is huge and there is an infinite number of nasties, so it should keep yer busy for a while.

This is an excellent game on budget■

★★★★☆ ★★★★☆ 8

CLASSIX 1

COMPILATION Label: **The Edge** Price: **£8.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Not as spectacular as some of the more recent compilations but Bobby Bearing is a very good game

Yep, it's another compilation with exactly the same name as all the others. (I didn't know there were so many ways to spell classics). I'm sorry Ed, but I'm just not in the mood. I've just had an unhappy love affair, my cat just died and I've just got my finger trapped in the hudojnewx, sorry typewriter. What, oh yeah, the review.

Five games, all re-releases. The pick of the crop, is Bobby Bearing. **It was the last of the** Marble Madness **derivitives and it's a well-wicked game. The other four unfortunately aren't up to the same standard.** Brian Bloodaxe **is a bit like** Dynamite Dan **only a good deal less playable platform game.** Starbike **is too similar to** Lunar Jetman **(which I hated).** Psytraxx **is big and boring and** That's The Spirit **is a rather run-of-the-mill icon-driven adventure.**

Result: one very decent game and four passable ones.■

★★☆☆☆ ★★☆☆☆ 4

INTERNATIONAL KARATE

ARCADE Label: **Endurance Games** Author: **System 3** Price: **£2.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Previously boring over-priced rubbish now released as boring rubbish but cheaper. Some improvement

Eons ago, a man underwent a strenge phenomenon. His fist exploded. Many of his tribe called programmers saw this wonderous sight and decided to try it themselves. They were not very good at it. They ended up in pain with cries of "Yie-ar-kung-fu" or "Ninja-Master". So the exploding fist reigned supreme.

Then rival tribe called System 3 decided to cash in on the trend. It launched it's own version of Fist, "International Karate", **and rather inevitably it also failed miserably.**

Now years later International Karate **is back. What a shame – it's still no good.**

On the plus side, like Fist, it has 16 moves including a variety of kicks and punches, and some goodish backdrops. Nice looking game, but a mite too easy to complete for my liking■

★★☆☆☆ ★★☆☆☆ 4

MISSION JUPITER

ARCADE Label: **Code Masters** Price: **£1.99** Author: **Derek Brewster** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Potentially good idea poorly implemented in this below average budget shoot-em

Promises, promises. Yet again, in leaps Code Masters with another 'ultimate' shoot-em-up. First they promise us 'pure arcade action'. I'll be a PR man's uncle if I've seen any arcade machines that have bad sound, jerky scrolling and poorly defined characters. Then there's the 'incredible life forms'. Wow! Bouncing boxes and tea-pots that spout bullets. 'Two-player action'. Cor! Shame it doesn't mention that they play one at a time.

The game itself scrolls (jerkily) from left to right. On the way your space-suited fellow must shoot all the enemies while dodging the slow-moving bullets by flying around the screen by use of their jet-pack. Along the way you must make sure to replenish your ammunition and energy.

Perhaps the biggest surprise of all is the programmer of all this tosh – Derek Brewster – creator of such great games as Kentilla **and** Codename Mat. **He should have known better■**

★★☆☆☆ ★☆☆☆☆ 3

ZONE

FRANKENSTEIN

Well not exactly X-rated – actually it got a 15 certificate according to the sticker on the box so I don't want any of you sub-fifteens taking a sneak look, OK?

It's an adventure of course – the follow-up to **Dracula.** And it's a big program, held on twin cassettes.

In Part 1 you play Frankenstein – (Victor to his friends) setting out to find the monster you created four years previously. The journey may take you to a far mountain range, first of all, however, you need to get out of your front door.

In Part 2, the adventure moves from a cottage in the woods and a frightened couple through to a derelict chateau where you come face to face with da da da dahhh . . . him.

And in Part 3 you *are* it. As the monster you have to find out what makes you a killer (I blame the hi-rises and today's uncaring society mayself).

```
What shall I do now? examine loc
k
I can't for some reason.
What shall I do now?
What shall I do now? walk back
Sorry,I don't quite understand.

What shall I do now?
What shall I do now? turn around
and walk west
I can't for some reason.
What shall I do now? look
I am in the living room which
takes up most of the ground
floor.A rough stone chimney
stack forms the centrepiece of
the room,tapering as it rises
to the ceiling.The front door
is to the east.I can also see
a small picture of my parents
What shall I do now? help
Sorry,no help in part one.Now
get on with it!
What shall I do now?
```

As an adventure **Frankenstein** is intelligent if not actually world shattering. It doesn't have the 'put the third pixie in your pocket next to the number you just thought of' complex sentence analyser stuff like **The Pawn** but it does seem to have a tolerably large vocabulary and doesn't respond stupidly.

So where does the X-ratedness come in? Not in the text that's for sure. If anywhere it comes in the few graphic illustrations there are scattered around the game. These are moderately gory and astoundingly detailed.

The game puzzles begin early – if you don't do the right thing at the kick off you'll die in about

PROGRAMMERS

ROD PIKE has something of a horror fixation, judging from his published work to date. A stickler for accuracy, in **Frankenstein** he used the original version of the novel as reference, rather than any of the film adaptations

SOFTOGRAPY: **Dracula** (*CRL*, 1986)



X-RATED SOFTWARE

Dare you look at some of the horrors currently on sale?

HOW TO BE A C

PROGRAMMERS

SENTIENT SOFTWARE are the people behind **Bastard.** The game design was a team effort, and the code was produced by Elliot Gay. Graphics were put together by YTS recruit Allastair Watt.

After the success of their **Winter Games** conversion for US Gold they moved over to Ocean to produce the epic 128K game **Tai-Pan**, just recently released

SOFTOGRAPHY: **Falcon** (*Virgin*, 1985, **Scrabble** (*Leisure Genius*, 1985), **Winter Games** (*Epyx*, 1986), **Tai-Pan** (*Ocean*, 1987)

This review will contain the following words which may be considered offensive: wee, fart and bastard. If you think you may be offended by these words please do not read on.

***How to be a Complete Bastard*, the book, was not a very likely subject for a computer license, and yet now we have the game. Still Virgin got it cheap. It owns the rights.**

How to be a Complete Bastard **may be the only title here that actually merits an X-rated tag (or at least so some will think) it is also the only such game ever to have been issued by a major software house.**

Curiously How to ... **looks quite a lot like the** Young Ones **game. A split screen shows you; Sir Adrian, and the room you are currently in on the top half and you; Sir Adrian, and the room you are currently in on the bottom half. Um..er this may sound a bit confusing but in one screen it's you as seen from one perspective and in the other it displays the room from other angles. The bottom view also spins round and round if you get drunk.**

Playing the game is like this. Move Sir Adrian – a medium sized sprite – around the room of a largish house in which the party appears to be in full swing. You can wander about searching everything including microwaves, sofas, garden





FACTS BOX

Gigantic, predominantly text adventure with a few excellent illustrations and many inventive touches

FRANKENSTEIN
Label: CRL
Author: Rod Pike
Price: £9.99
Memory: 48K (multiload)/128K

Reviewer: Graham Taylor

★★★★☆ 8



three moves. It doesn't get any easier – useful objects are well hidden and the descriptive text doesn't give much away.

Adventures don't seem to sell all that well these days but there is so much in this one it deserves to do well. Ignore all the X-rated aspects. If you want an intelligent, gigantic text adventure with a few magnificent illustrations, **Frankenstein's** your man■

SOFT & CUDDLY

Oh, very bloody pleasant, I must say. What a remarkably good way to start a Monday morning – being thrust a copy of a game that involves sewing pieces of your dismembered mother back together and being told: "This looks like your kind of thing."

Soft and Cuddly is the latest game from the poison pen of John George Jones, the person behind the cult hit **Got to Hell**.

Being a kind of **Manic Miner** derivative, **Soft and Cuddly** can hardly boast the most original gameplay and has to rely on the novelty points it can score by its sheer gruesomeness. The plot, while largely unnecessary during play, ought to be explained. Your father has been locked in a fridge by your mother and is shortly to come to a fate worse than death at the hands of a group of evil spirits. Your mother has had an accident and is now scattered in numerous pieces throughout the game-map.

Your objective in this highly Freudian episode is to collect pieces of your mother's body and take them to the fridge. Once you've got all the vital bits together, you can take on the jolly little task of mending her. Since the game is fairly big (256 screens) you certainly won't be able to get all the bits before losing all your lives unless you have some sort of idea where to

Graphically, it is certainly unusual, and occasionally brilliant. As your little man descends on his jet-pack into an



apparently empty screen, an enormous multi-coloured monster will lurch up from a brick walkway and flail around, blocking your path.

The actual playing of the

FACTS BOX

Oddball low-budget schlock-horror outing. Could get tedious but there's a large map and lots of things to shoot

SOFT AND CUDDLY
Label: Power House
Author: John George Jones
Price: £2.99
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K

Reviewer: Jim Douglas

★★★☆☆ 6

PROGRAMMERS
JOHN GEORGE JONES is the man responsible! And pretty strange he is too . . .
SOFTOGRAPHY: **Go To Hell** (*Triple Six*, 1986)

game is, unfortunately, a rather tiresome business. The 'silly walk' option does little to disguise the fact that all you really get to do is move left and right, fly up, fall down, *Fire* and pick up the occasional item.

On your travels you will undoubtedly be harassed by lots of bog standard cannon-fodder aliens which are about as interesting as watching a golf tournament in the rain. They drift around being annoying and sapping your energy. A quick beam from your laser though, and they're history.

If you fire at the static scenery (trees, bricks, etc) they will gradually become worn away. Should you find the patience to do this for long enough, you will create a gap through which you can walk. While this is quite handy for moving around, it takes a colossal amount of time, and actually looks a smidgen like a bug.

Soft and Cuddly is a decidedly odd game.

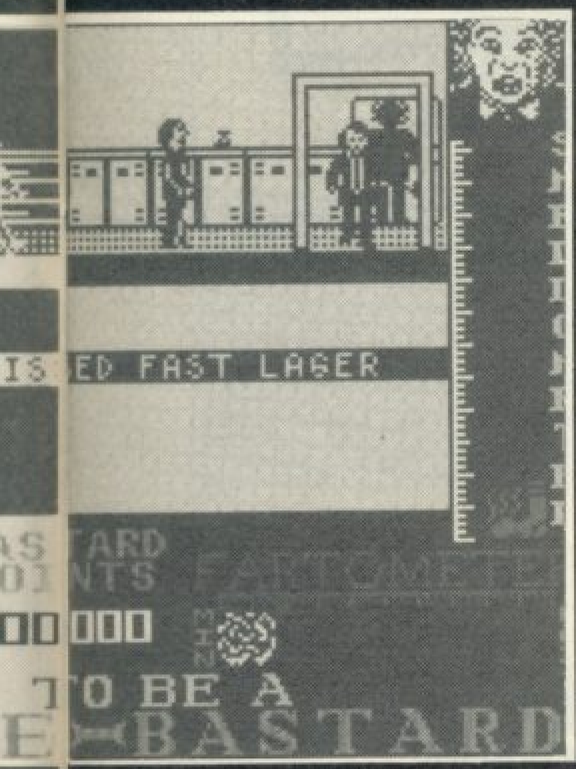
It's a bit like a cross between a splatter movie and one of those strange Belgian art movies done with stop-frame photography with people in stupid poses gliding around the room, pushing chairs etc.

There's a lot to look at – plenty of opportunities to go "ooh, urgh, yuk" – but not particularly interesting to take part in.

If you're the sort of person who likes drawing maps and watching very large unpleasant graphics jigging up and down like a box of offal, all well and good.

Otherwise, **Soft and Cuddly** could become remarkably tiresome after a very short time■

OMPLETE BA*T*RD!



tables, coats, desks and less savoury objects for items which look as though, one way or another, they could be used to give offence and thus improve your Bastard rating. Here is one, comparatively tasteful, example – search the coats for

FACTS BOX

Utterly tasteless but tolerably well programmed and quite funny really. Not for the sensitive or easily outraged

HOW TO BE A COMPLETE BASTARD
Label: Virgin
Author: Sentient Software
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

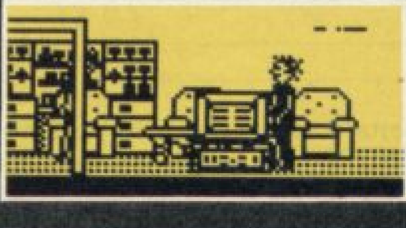
Reviewer: Graham Taylor

★★★★☆ 7

a pen, get the pen and accost a partygoer and... that's right – jab him with the pen. Fun huh? Just as doing nasty things earns you points doing nice (girlie) things wipes them out. Putting the Bam Bee video on, for example, is a mistake.

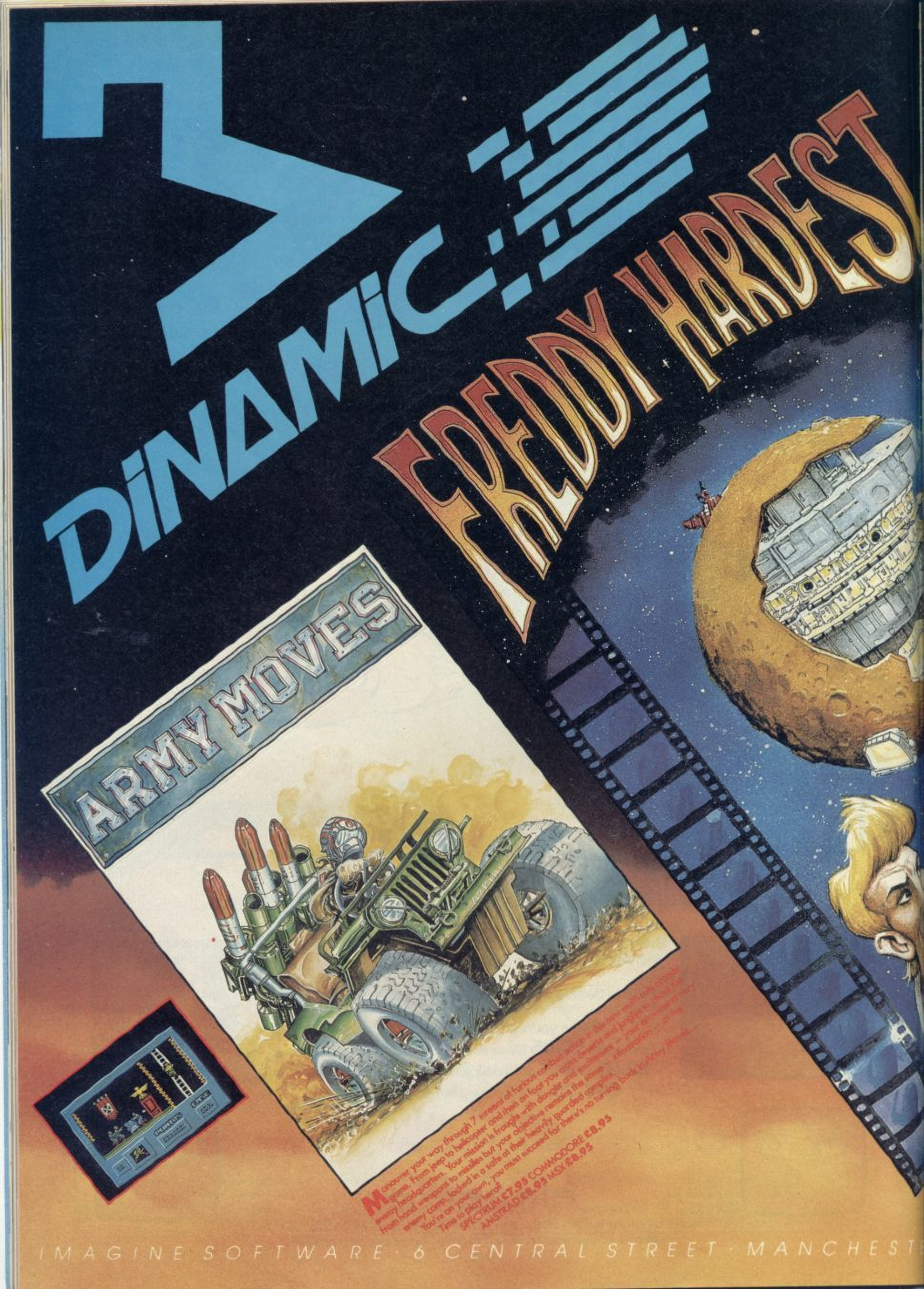
Most of the time, the art of the game is figuring out a dastardly use for the unlikely objects you find. Would you know the extremely unpleasant use of which clingfilm can be put?

Crass, tasteless, juvenile. I quite liked it really. Sensitive parents won't■



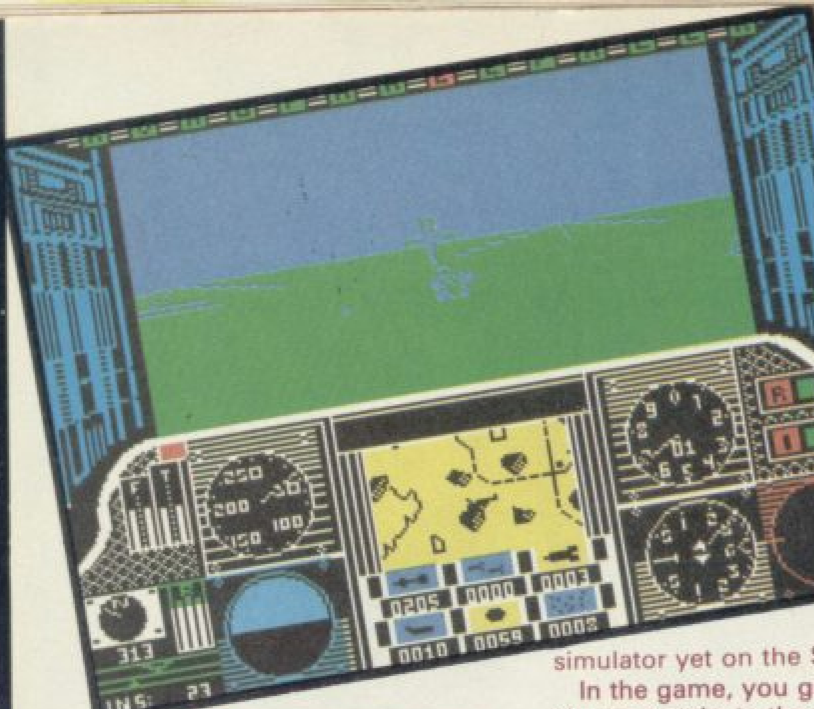


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FACTS BOX

Highly impressive combat simulation and there's enough action to interest even the non-simulations player

GUNSHIP
Label: Microprose
Price: £9.95 (tape)
£12.95 (disc)
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: [signature]

★★★★☆
★★★★★ **9**

STRATEGY SIMULATION REVIEW

GUNSHIP

Well, it's been a long time coming, hasn't it? **Gunship** from Microprose was around ages ago on the C64 and everyone thought it was the best thing to happen to the future of combat simulations since sliced bread (What's that got to do with combat? – Ed).

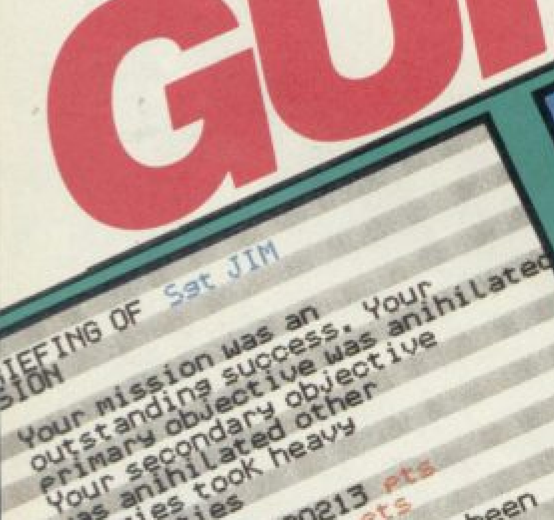
Unfortunately, it took so long being ported across to the Spectrum many people lacking the faith of us at SU began to doubt the possibility of the conversion, and complain that it wouldn't turn out at all well.

Well, nyah booh sucks to them, because they're totally wrong in every way. The boys at Ver Prose have come up trumps and produced what is arguably the best flight simulator yet on the Spectrum.

In the game, you get the chance to take to the skies in an Apache attack helicopter. Armed with a staggering array of weapons and protected by armour plating, it can chew up and spit out just about anything thrown at it.







Talk about fools rushing in.

Within seconds I had come to more grief than you could imagine. I hadn't a clue where I was, and was struggling with a machine that's not easy to control in the best of conditions, let alone in a strong sidewind at night with full enemy frontline forces attacking.

Back in base I admitted that maybe the instructions and options could bear a once over and I was happily surprised to see quite how easily accessible they were.

When you're starting out you can select a number of options to make life easier in the early stages. The background for the menus is a rather nice illustration of the helicopter, and the tasteful grey boxes containing the options overlay themselves from top left to bottom right.

You can tailor the basic elements, like weather conditions and the skill of the enemy. Also highly inexperienced pilots – like myself – can also choose the 'perfect landing' option which prevents almost any encounter with the ground from turning into a crash.

The best thing about **Gunship** is the realistic way the missions are detailed. Cycling through more grey screens, you gradually learn more about the nature of your assignment – the strength of the repelling forces, location of primary and secondary targets and difficulty, etc.

Missions vary from easy stuff like taking out a tank somewhere to seriously tough Purple Heart material that no-one in their right minds would try.

Once you've selected your mission equip yourself with varying combinations of cannon, rocket and missile ammunition, together with fuel. It's up to you to decide upon the correct combination, depending on your mission.

Once you get going, having grasped the engine, rotor and thrust controls, you can start darting around the vector graphic landscape looking for trouble. Soon enough your on-board computer will flash up a message either indicating that a target of some description is in range or than an enemy helicopter is now airborne. Unfortunately, as far as on-board computers go, this one isn't too smart and will happily inform you that your own base in a target. Anyway, when in range, it's a fairly satisfying affair to lock on and let rip with whichever weapon is appropriate.

You can flip to a map screen, too. So you know where you're going and so you can make more econimic use of fuel than if you were to simply bumble around.

Graphically the actual 3D, it has to be said, isn't praticularly exciting to look at. Let's face it, vector line graphics aren't much cop. In **Gunship**, though, Microprose has managed, by keeping everythging fairly functional, to make sure the game plays at a sensible speed.

Gunship is a game of great depth, incorporating nearly all the things that give real combat pilots a headache.

It's very entertaining for both serious sim-heads and people, like me, who aren't too fussed about the more high-brow intellectually challenging elements of flight control.

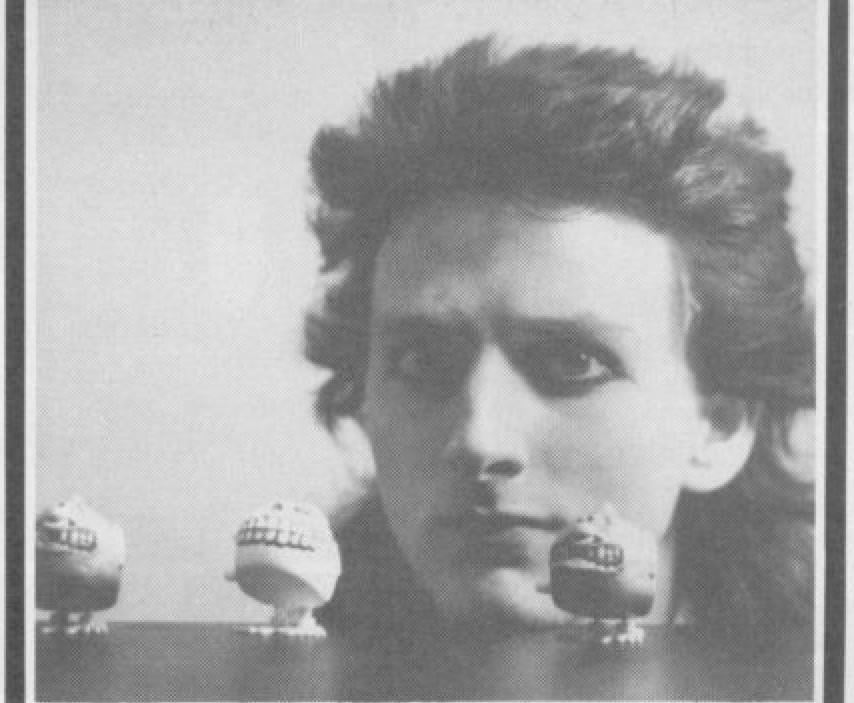
Incidentally, **Gunship** also looks set to be one of the first titles out on disc for the 128K+3■

PROGRAMMER

DARREL DEANISS has been programming simulations for a few years and produced **Gunship** after a couple of big hits with **Fighter Pilot** and **Tomahawk** for Digital Integration.

SOFTOGRAPHY: **Fighter Pilot** (*Digital Integration*, 1985), **Tomahawk** (*Digital Integration*, 1986), **Gunship** (*Microprose*, 1987)

C.O.D.E. T.A.L.K.



JOHN GEORGE JONES

If ever there was a controversial programmer in years gone by, you can bet that he wasn't as controversial as the author of Go to Hell **and now** Soft and Cuddly **from the Power House. Manically egotistically psychotic or a fairly nice bloke? Read on and decide for yourselves . . .**

It says on the cassette inlay that you're a singer/songwriter. How did you get involved with computers, then?

What star sign are you? What year were you born? Leo, eh? They're usually tossers, but I think you may be OK. Anyway, going a long way back, I wrote this art program and took it round to lots of people, and a few said they were interested, and then they turned around a month or so later and just said "Who are you?" So I wrote Go to Hell **as a kind of reply to them**

Whatever possessed you to write a game like **Soft and Cuddly** It's pretty horrible

It was much more disgusting in the original version. The babies in the game were originally being ripped apart, and the sheep was bouncing up and down on a corpse. I didn't write the game because I'm a horrible person, I wrote it to amuse myself. I love the reaction people give. I can't stand 'nice' innoffensive things, like Jimmy Tarbuck and *Terry and June.* They drive me up the wall

I don't suppose that there are many programmers or programs around that you like much at the moment, then?

No. They're all rubbish. Everything ever written has been useless. Like when Jet Set Willy **appeared everyone screamed 'Hallelujah!' but it was nothing. My game is the best game ever written. You should have given it ten stars**

What sort of place do you live in, John?

Exeter. It's a horrible place. But I live with my girlfriend Wendy and she's a Pisces and she's very cuddly. I have a rabbit called Abau Chanab. My Dad invented the name, because it sounded stupid

What do you like to eat?

Curries. Lots of curries. And Go bars, too. They're great. Nutty with chocolate on the outside. My hair looks really stupid on the inlay cover. They've painted some of it out. I look like Marc Almond

If you could have a head transplant, whose would you have?

Mine. There was this guy in America who had all this plastic surgery so he'd look like Michael Jackson. That's just totally sad. You should be happy with yourself

Do you believe in God?

He doesn't have much to do with me. Jehova's Witnesses are the worst people in the world, though. They should be shot

What sort of music do you like?

Peter Hammill is great. He was in a band called *Vandergraph Generator* and he invented punk, not John Lydon. Kate Bush is quite nice. She's very shilling. Fish (Marillion) writes lousy lyrics. He thinks he's got something to say, but he hasn't. Anyway, I know that I'm better than any of them

What do you think of the recent investigations into cryogenic operations?

I don't care, really. I don't mind dying because I'm a Scorpio. I have twelve lives, and I've already had three. What was I before this life? I don't think I was Adolf Hitler. He was a Gemini

What's your favourite TV ad?

Oh, I don't know. I like the Worthington Best Bitter one at the battle of Waterloo. And I like the Steven Fry and Hugh Laurie one for cigars

Do you ever enter these competitions that say "Congratulations! You have won the chance to enter our prize draw for £150,000"?

No. I just send back the envelopes with insults in them

What annoys you most?

Games players, I think. They should be shot. I hate false modesty too

What's your favourite pastime?

I don't really have a pastime. Music is what I do. I like writing down what I feel. Life can be a bit boring at times

Do you like books? What's your favourite?

Ah, yes! *Throwback* by Tom Sharpe is brilliant. It's got a very complicated plot

What's the most horrible thing you can think of?

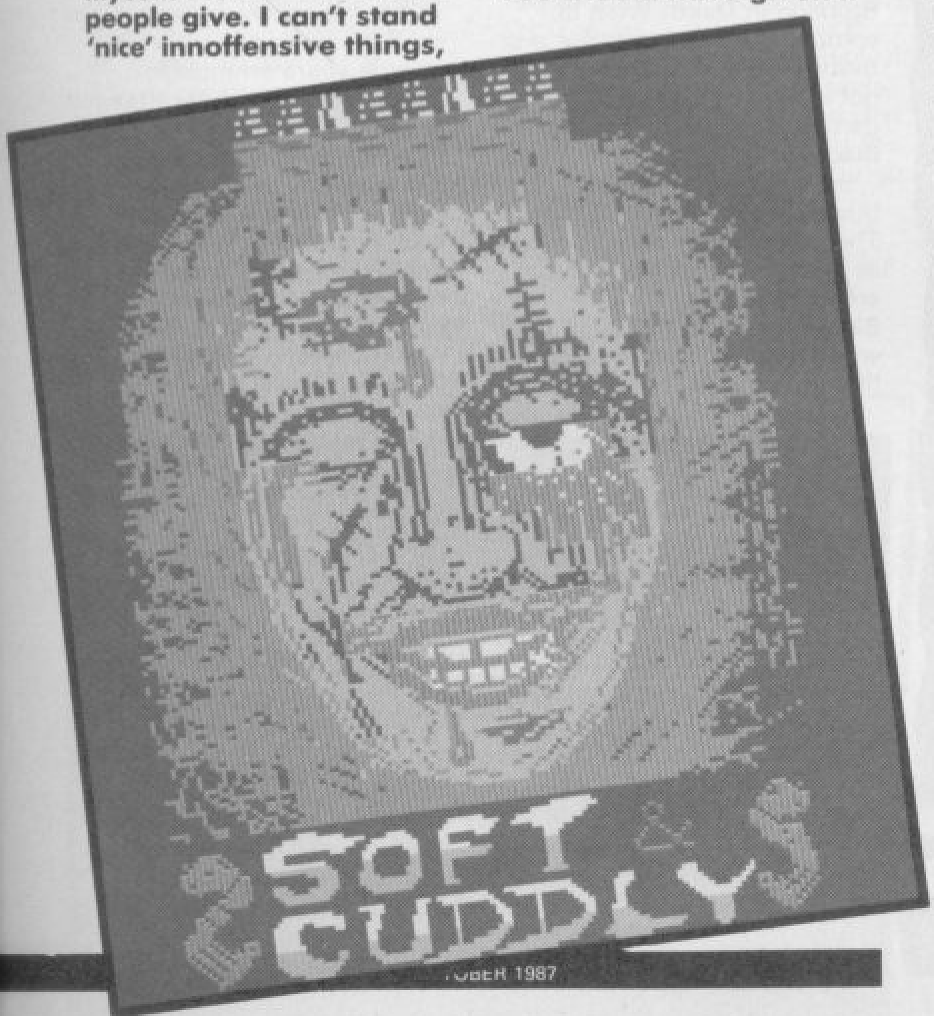
Leon Britton, I think, oh, and Roy Hattersley, I suppose

How long do you think you'll be interested in computers?

I've already lost interest. Most of the people who use them are boring. Hackers are just totally sad. Soft and Cuddly **is for people who are bored with the other lousy games, and want something new**

Finally, is there anything you'd like to leave us to think about?

Yes. Mozart and Shakespeare were rubbish, and can I say hello to Alan and Dave?■



TWILIGHT

EVENING STAR

SIMULATION Label: **Hewson** Author: **Mike Male, Bob Hillyer** Price: **£7.95** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **none** Reviewer: **Jerry Muir**

Another superb steam simulation from Hewson. If you liked Southern Belle this is more of the same

Stoke that boiler! It's full steam ahead with the sequel to Hewson's runaway train-simulation success, Southern Belle (Leave out the train jokes – OK? Ed).

And it's another trip on a seaside excursion. This time it's to Bournemouth from Bath on the Evening Star.

Though the game is superficially very similar to its predecessor, this particular run offers a host of new problems, one of which is that much of the line is single-track working! This was a result of the Somerset and Dorset Railway's lack of funds when they built the branch, and while later owners tried to convert as much as possible to double-track, potentially hazardous single stretches remained.

Evening Star places you in the cab of the last train to haul the Pines Express in 1962, watching a vector graphics display of the countryside as you head to the sea. Admittedly it's not quite such interesting scenery as on the Southern Belle run, but it's a much longer journey – two hours if you opt for the full game.

If you haven't played Southern Belle you'd be well advised to watch the demo for a while, keeping an eye on the controls, before steaming out of Bath with only three controls to cope with – the *Regulator, Vacuum Brake* and *Cut Off.* Pressing the relevant initial key moves the lever or dial up one notch. Adding *Symbol Shift* decreases it.

For the experts you also have the *Blower, Injector, Fire Doors, Stoking* and *Dampers* . . .

If you hate simulations or never wanted to be an engine driver you'll almost certainly hate everything about this progrm.

But anyone else will certainly find it delightful. Every bit as good as the original■

★★★★★★★★★☆ 9

THE FIFTH QUADRANT

ARCADE Label: **Bubble Bus** Author: **in-house** Price: **£7.95** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Jerry Muir**

Big playing area and four droids do not an arcade adventure make. For fans only

It's been a while since we saw anything bubble up from Bubble Bus and boy, does this look like it's been in the pipeline for some time.

Sadly that doesn't mean many man hours spent perfecting a blockbuster – just that it's old-fashioned!

You control four droids on board the spaceship Orion, with the intention of re-uniting them on the bridge for a mass logging-on ceremony. In your way stand the nasty Zimen, who appear from nowhere, like fluff in your navel, and need to be bombed out of the way.

To keep controls to a minimum, Bubble Bus lets you communicate with the ship's computer by bumping into its consoles. These access an alien language game, which looks like the Martian edition of *Blockbusters* and lets you command features such as lifts.

Despite the OK-ish Ultimate-style 3D graphics, nice sound effects and 230-odd rooms, this will only appeal to the most hardened arcade-adventurer■

★★★☆☆★★☆☆☆ 5

WOLFAN

ARCADE Label: **Bulldog** Author: **Charles Bystram** Price: **£2.99** Joystick: **various** Memory: **48K/128K** Reviewer: **John Gilbert**

An uneventful romp through yet another 3D fantasy world. The hero appears to be Batman in elven garb

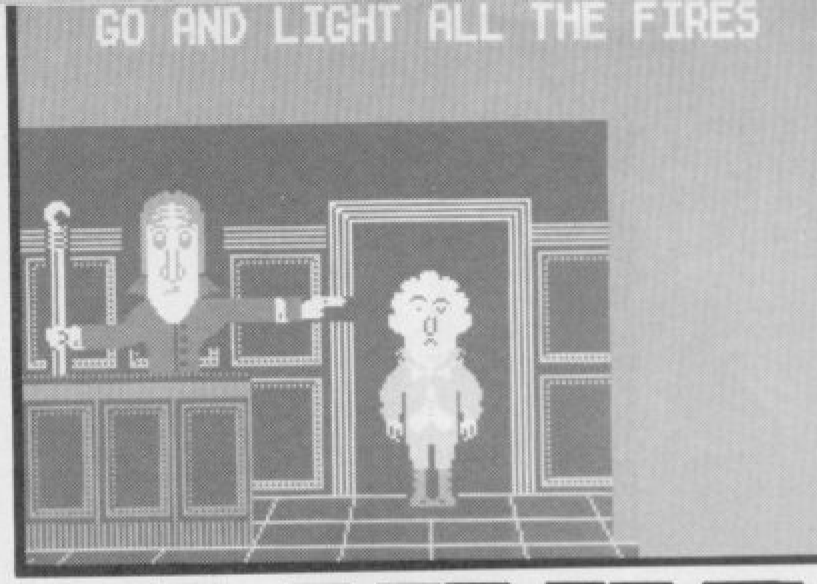
Wolfan is Batman on the cheap. That's the only way to describe it. Admittedly, it's set in grim and distant past, but that doesn't hide the similarity between the graphics techniques and the Ocean game. Even the bat ears and cloak, cunningly disguised as elven pointies and our hero's cape of office, show that the author appears to have gained inspiration from elsewhere.

Your heroic quest is to destroy the reign of the Nasty One, who's guards and monsters habitually leap down at you from pillars with nasty looking swords. During combat the two fighting figures are enlarged to cover the whole screen using a simple, but effective, magnification technique. Unfortunately fights last for only a few seconds when you're usually defeated. The graphics are also, sadly, wooden in animation and unconvincing as they goose-step around the screen.

Definitely not up to the usually high Mastertronic standard■

★★★★☆★★★★☆ 6

ZONE



FLUNKY

Flunky is the latest offering from Don **Trapdoor** Priestly, and it's undeniably the most ridiculous idea for a game I've ever come across.

You are a servant, sent off to light the fires in the royal rooms at Buck House. Unfortunately those rooms contain various Royals, all of whom set a task for you to perform. In return for completing each task, you get an autograph. Collect five big nobs' autographs, and you've finished the game. If you're interested . . .

Flunky *is* entertaining to begin with – no question. The same graphics techniques that made **Trapdoor** so wonderful are here again. The figures are nice and large, colour clash is virtually non-existent, and the sight of Randy Andy popping out of the bath-tub is – for the first time – highly amusing. Fergie's horribly realistically red-headed and Prince Charles' ears are large enough to hang-glide from.

But after a few trips through the Royal Apartments, collecting Andrew's boat, and Fergie's freckles, being shot by psychopathic guards every time you try to sneak into the Queen's rooms, it does lose its charm somewhat.

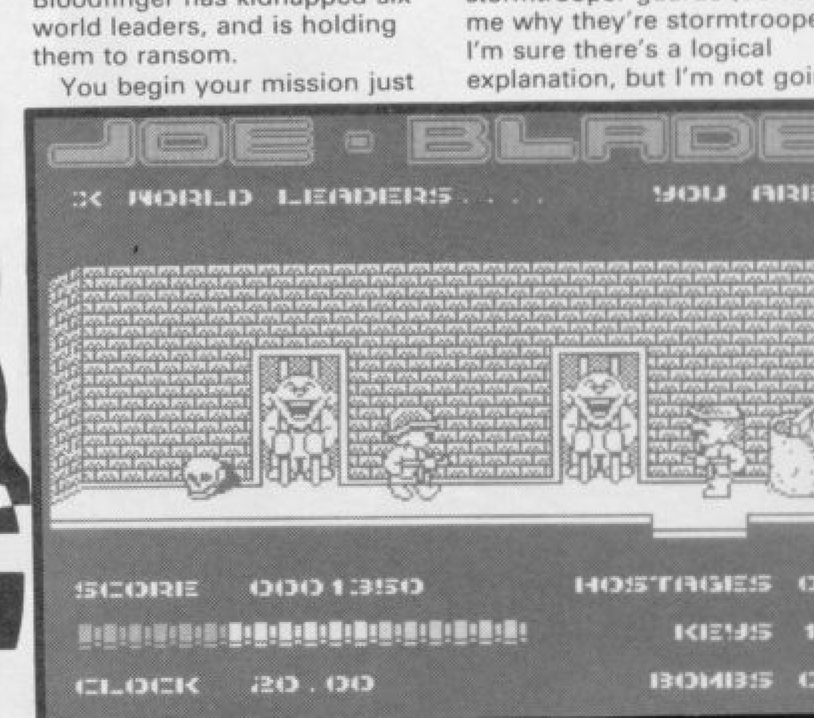
With **Flunky,** the solution to a

Joe Blade

Maybe there's something about men with moustaches that means they make good games. Last month we had Charles Bronson in **Death Wish III,** complete with moustache and bazooka, and this month we've got a dude called Joe Blade in a game called, well, it's called **Joe Blade** actually.

So what's it all about then, this new moustachioed game? The plot is about as interesting as sheep dip, but I'll tell you anyway. The evil Crax Bloodfinger has kidnapped six world leaders, and is holding them to ransom.

You begin your mission just outside Bloodfinger's base. As you move through the prison complex, you'll come across various bits and pieces, most of which are pretty darn useful, and some of which need to be shot. Those that are useful include spare ammunition, lunch packs (tastefully arranged to include a bottle of wine and an apple, to build up your ever diminishing strength), cell keys to open doors, hostages to rescue, and the all important bombs to prime. Those that need to be shot are the stormtrooper guards (don't ask me why they're stormtroopers, I'm sure there's a logical explanation, but I'm not going



FACTS BOX

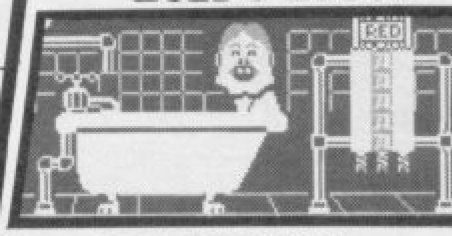
Latest from Don Priestly – he of the big sprites. Very similar ideas to Trapdoor, but with a poorer plot and play

FLUNKY
Label: Piranha
Author: Don Priestly
Price: £9.95
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K

Reviewer: Tamara Howard

★★★☆☆ 6

ARCADE ★ REVIEW



problem is nearly always the wrong way.

In fact the tasks are often overly complicated, and it's usually rather more luck than judgement that you find the right solution.

Still, there are lots of things going on. And as I've said before, they're complicated. As you move through the rooms of the royal residence various royals will pop out and give you a task. ("Fetch my wig," or "Feed the corgis"). It's up to you to do the business, using anything you've seen on your travels.

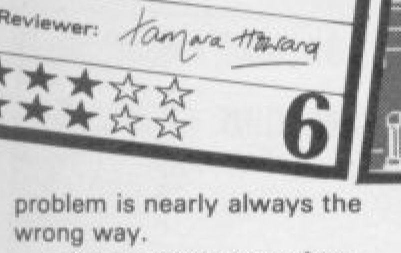
If you've ever felt like performing utterly mindless tasks for mind-bogglingly boring people, then you're just going to love **Flunky**.

If, on the other hand, you find the idea of being a virtual slave to the Royal Family totally abhorent then leave it well alone■

PROGRAMMERS

DON PRIESTLY has been programming for years and years. He goes back to ZX81 days. His **Dictator** is still the favourite of many strategy fans. **Trap Door** got a classic last year and he's currently working on the sequel, **Trap Door II.**

SOFTOGRAPHY: **Dictator** (*DK Tronics, 1984*), **Jumbly** (*DK Tronics, 1984*), **Minder** (*DK Tronics, 1985*), **Popeye** (*Ocean, 1985*), **Trap Door** (*Piranha, 1986*)



to delve into it now) and hunky men in vests with knives.

The twist lies in the bombs you have to plant. You can't finish the game until you prime six bombs to destroy Craxfinger's base.

But priming the bombs isn't easy. Indeed it's almost a game within a game.

First find your bomb, which is easy enough – a bomb in **Joe Blade** is nearly as big as your sprite – and then enter bomb-priming mode. Then you'll see the letters A-E on the screen, jumbled up, and you then have twenty seconds to set the code in alphabetical order. Not as easy as it sounds.

It is actually this bomb-priming sequence which sets **Joe Blade** apart from all the other flipping arcade adventures around at the moment.

Two of the five letters are highlighted, and by using *Fire*, you swap these two letters over. If the order of the letters was DEBAC, and D and A were highlighted, those two letters would swap places. By using the left and right keys, you can widen the gap between two letters and then swap them. (You could highlight D and B, or D and C for instance. It needs a clear had to actually complete the task in the time allowed, and all too often you'll find that the bomb self destructs and you go up with it.

It's a good enough combination of game elements to please lots of people, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Well done Players. Tick. VG■

PROGRAMMERS

COLIN SWINBOURNE has been programming professionally for only eleven months. He dabbled in Basic for a couple of years, however. **Joe Blade** is the first game that he has had commercially released, after a couple of unsuccessful attempts. He's currently working on **Deviant,** scheduled for release in September

FACTS BOX

A game with elements to please all. With a clever sub-game and nice graphics, it deserves to go down a treat

JOE BLADE
Label: Players
Author: Colin Swinbourne
Price £1.99
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K

Reviewer: Tamara Howard

★★★★☆ 8

TWILIGHT ZONE

DOWN TO EARTH

ARCADE Label: **Firebird** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various**
Reviewer: **Tamara Howard**

Trundle that 'dozer! Entertaining scoop 'em up fades with use

Well, it was like this, see Guv. I got me dozer our of the 'ut first off this mornin', and I drove up the road like, nice an' quiet, and then, all of a sudden like, things went all technicolour and I found myself in some sort of computer game.

It weren't like no building site I'd ever bin on before. There were fuel dumps to pick up, and strike me down wiv a feather there was all these aliens, all over the flipin' place, and strike me, Guv, there I was blown up. Din know what hit me . . .

Down to Earth is one of those budget games that oh-so-nearly makes it, but not quite. For a little while, it's moderately entertaining chewing on dirt, but after a rock has fallen on your head for the fourteenth time, your enthusiasm tends to wane a tad.

I'm convinced there must be a good game in the wildlife preservation versus the motorway game idea, this isn't it■

★★★☆☆ 6

BACK TO THE FUTURE

ARCADE Label: **Firebird** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various**
Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Budget re-release of former Activision 'big-licensed' drivel. Good for five of six minutes

That's the power of love, da na na na. Yeah, get down Huey, get down Marty, get down Shep. They say you can't keep a good game down. With this game I had trouble keeping my lunch down. Don't get me wrong, it's a good idea – just badly implemented. You take the role of Marty McFly, who has gone back in time and met his mummy and daddy and mummikins has fallen in luv with him. He's got to get them back together with the help of Dr Emmett Brown and with the hinderance of Biff the bully.

But it's not all bad. There are two very good digitised photographs and it's now very cheap!■

★★☆☆☆ 4

THREE COIN OP CLASSICS

COMPILATION Label: **US Gold** Price: **£9.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: various Reviewer: **Tamara Howard**

Three good solid conversions at a knock-down price. There's sadly nothing new here to tempt you

In a fit of generosity, US Gold has released a compilation of what it calls classic coin-op conversions for £9.99 the lot.

Firstly, there's Break Thru, a high speed chase around. An easy-to-play, hard to complete game, Break Thru involves driving very, very, fast in a car and shooting things before they shoot you.

Secondly, Crystal Castles, A good 3D landscape is slightly marred by a rather mankey bear as the central character. Again, it's easy to play but difficult to complete.

Lastly, Kung Fu Master, a prize combat game. Fast action and furious kicking.

An OK compilation, and it's all reissued stuff – none of it fabulous and at £3.33 each they're more expensive than budget■

★★★☆☆ 6

THE LOST RUBY

ADVENTURE Label: **Wrightchoice Software** Memory: **48K/128K** Price: **£3.50**
Reviewer: **Gary Rook**

Could have been a decent adventure. Next time, forget the travel-writing and concentrate on the game!

If you remember Kit Williams' book *Masquerade*, where the author hid a valuable piece of jewellery somewhere in Britain then published a book containing clues as to where it could be found, then you'll have a fair idea what this program is all about. The ideal in The Lost Ruby is much the same except there's no real jewel, and all the digging you are going to do will be on screen.

Basically, you chase round the Isle of Wight trying to track down the whereabouts of a ruby. No sooner have you walked out of Sandown than you're in Ryde. There's no real sense of journey; you don't feel like you have been or are going to real places. The location descriptions don't help any, either. The graphics are almost as basic, and certainly as dull, as the test location descriptions■

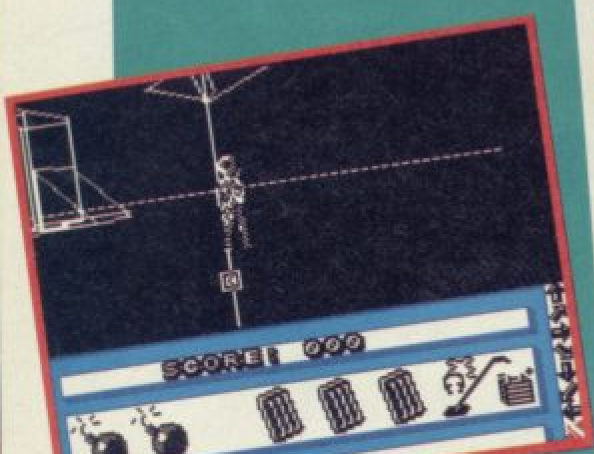
★★☆☆☆ 4

HOT
FULL PRICE

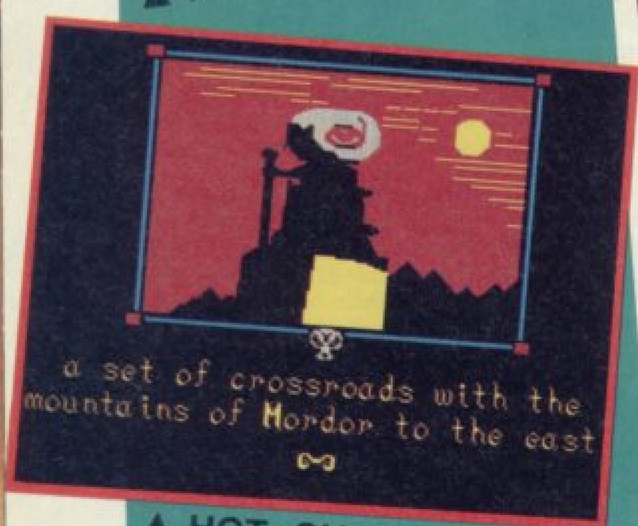
Very few new entries in the lower reaches of the 50 this month – obviously the September lull before the autumn! Melbourne House's middling Shadows of Mordor is hovering just outside the 20 with Martech's excellent 3D vector graphic blast Catch 23 in at 24. And Infogrames' strong first non-adventure release, Prohibition, moves up to just outside the 30



▲ HOT: PROHIBITION



▲ HOT: CATCH 23



▲ HOT: SHADOWS OF MORDOR

FULL PRICE 20

Pos	Last	Title	Comment	Classic	Publisher	Price	Rating
1	NEW!	ROAD RUNNER	Straightforward coin-op chase game – let down by small graphics		US GOLD	£9.95	7 STARS
2	NEW!	EXOLON	Superb. The best blast game for ages – buy it now!	CLASSIC	HEWSON	£7.95	10 STARS
3	(3)	LEADERBOARD TOURNAMENT	If you loved Leaderboard, you'll love this too		US GOLD	£4.99	9 STARS
4	NEW!	GAME OVER	Flip-screen game that fails to captivate. Average stuff		IMAGINE	£7.95	5 STARS
5	(1)	BARBARIAN	Top quality combat program. An essential purchase		PALACE	£9.95	10 STARS
6	(6)	LEADERBOARD	Deserves to take the simulation market by storm	CLASSIC	US GOLD	£9.95	10 STARS
7	(5)	GAUNTLET	Classic coin-op converted as well as you could wish		US GOLD	£8.99	10 STARS
8	(2)	ENDURO RACER	Puts the others to shame. A new standard for arcade conversions		ACTIVISION	£7.95	10 STARS
9	NEW!	LIVING DAYLIGHTS	Better than View to a Kill . . . Compendium of eight goodish short games		DOMARK	£9.95	7 STARS
10	(7)	HIT 6-PAK	Top value mix of oldies and one newie – varies from good to bad		ELITE	£9.95	9 STARS
11	(4)	ARMY MOVES	Highly violent and very morally unsound		IMAGINE	£8.95	10 STARS
12	NEW!	ZYNAPS	A game that joysticks were designed for	CLASSIC	HEWSON	£7.95	10 STARS
13	(10)	PAPERBOY	Excellent conversion from the coin-op hit. Great		ELITE	£7.95	10 STARS
14	(14)	KONAMI'S COIN-OP HITS	Good value compilation, with Yie Ar Kung Fu and Green Beret		IMAGINE	£9.95	9 STARS
15	(11)	HEAD OVER HEELS	Very wonderful ticket to runny jumpy city	CLASSIC	OCEAN	£7.95	10 STARS
16	(15)	VULCAN	Has to be a classic for any wargamer	CLASSIC	CCS	£9.95	10 STARS
17	NEW!	SILENT SERVICE	Best simulation for months	CLASSIC	MICROPROSE	£9.95	10 STARS
18	NEW!	MICRONAUT ONE	Complex, but worth it – you'll be hooked	CLASSIC	NEXUS	£9.95	10 STARS
19	(13)	F15 STRIKE EAGLE	Emphasis on simulation accuracy, not graphics or gameplay		MICROPROSE	£9.95	5 STARS
20	(18)	BIG 4	Four from Durell including two goodies: Saboteur and Combat Lynx		DURELL	£9.95	7 STARS

▼ IN THE TOP SLOT: ROAD RUNNER



SU CHARTS

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ARCADE

1	RUN FOR GOLD	ALTERNATIVE
2	MILK RACE	MASTERTRONIC
3	ROAD RUNNER	US GOLD
4	EXOLON	HEWSON
5	GAME OVER	IMAGINE

ADVENTURE

1	AGENT X	MASTERTRONIC
2	SHADOWS OF MORDOR	MELBOURNE HOUSE
3	KILLED UNTIL DEAD	US GOLD
4	SWORDS AND SORCERY	PSS
5	STAR WRECK	ALTERNATIVE

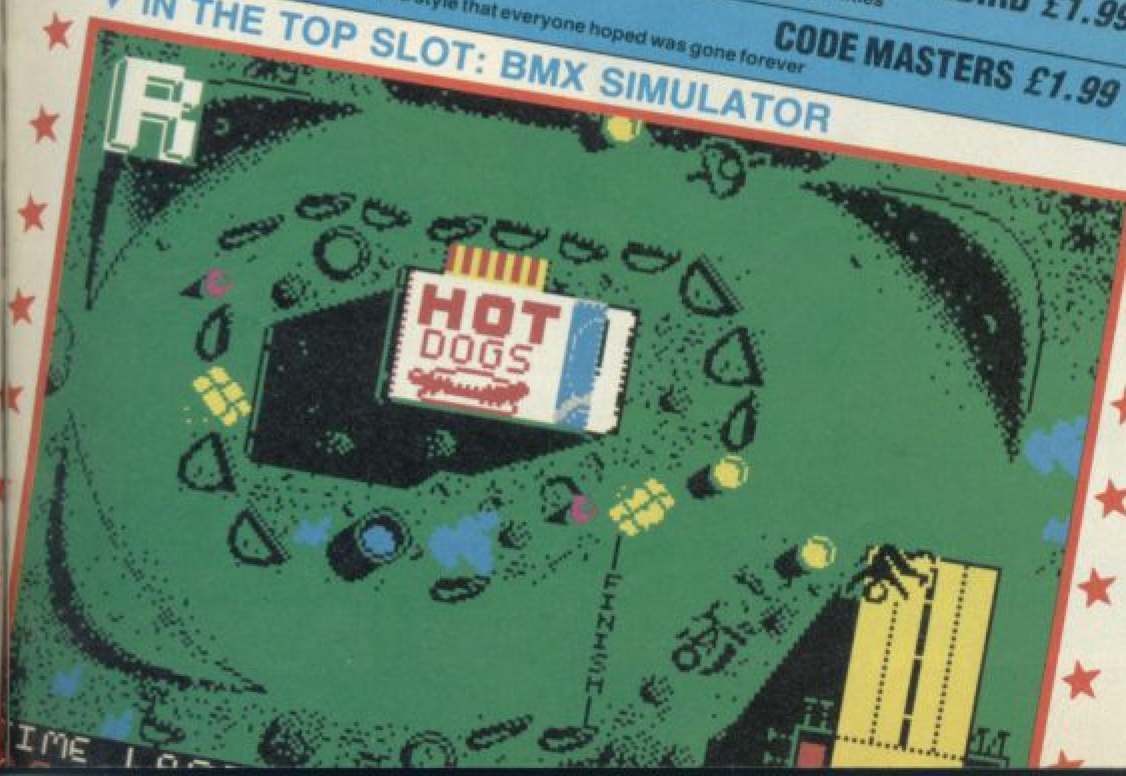
SIMULATION

1	BMX SIMULATOR	CODE MASTERS
2	LEADERBOARD TOURNAMENT	US GOLD
3	LEADERBOARD	US GOLD
4	OLYMPIC SPECTACULAR	ALTERNATIVE
5	EDDIE KIDD'S JUMP CHALLENGE	RICOCHET

BUDGET 10

1	(3)	**BMX SIMULATOR** It's a genuine simulation – a biker's paradise with smooth slippery action	CODE MASTERS	£1.99	10 STARS
2	NEW!	**RUN FOR GOLD** 3D running game – looks pretty good but gets tedious – you don't feel involved	ALTERNATIVE	£1.99	6 STARS
3	(1)	**MILK RACE** Nice tie-in to the cycle race. Entertaining, with a touch of suspense	MASTERTRONIC	£2.99	8 STARS
4	NEW!	**DEAD OR ALIVE** Commando variant set in the Wild West. Entertaining enough on budget	ALTERNATIVE	£1.99	7 STARS
5	NEW!	**KICK BOXING** It's games like this that give budget software a bad name	FIREBIRD	£1.99	1 STARS
6	(7)	**SPEED KING** Passable 3D racing game with bikes, not cars	MASTERTRONIC	£1.99	6 STARS
7	(4)	**FEUD** Highly entertaining arcade adventure – great graphics and 12 spells to conjure with	BULLDOG	£2.99	9 STARS
8	(6)	**OLLIE AND LISA** A graphically good but dull pot-boiler with cute characters	FIREBIRD	£1.99	8 STARS
9	(9)	**I, BALL** Neat arcade shooter. More sparkle and originality than most budget titles	FIREBIRD	£1.99	8 STARS
10	(6)	**BRAINACHE** Dull arcade game of a style that everyone hoped was gone forever	CODE MASTERS	£1.99	4 STARS

▼ IN THE TOP SLOT: BMX SIMULATOR



HOT BUDGET

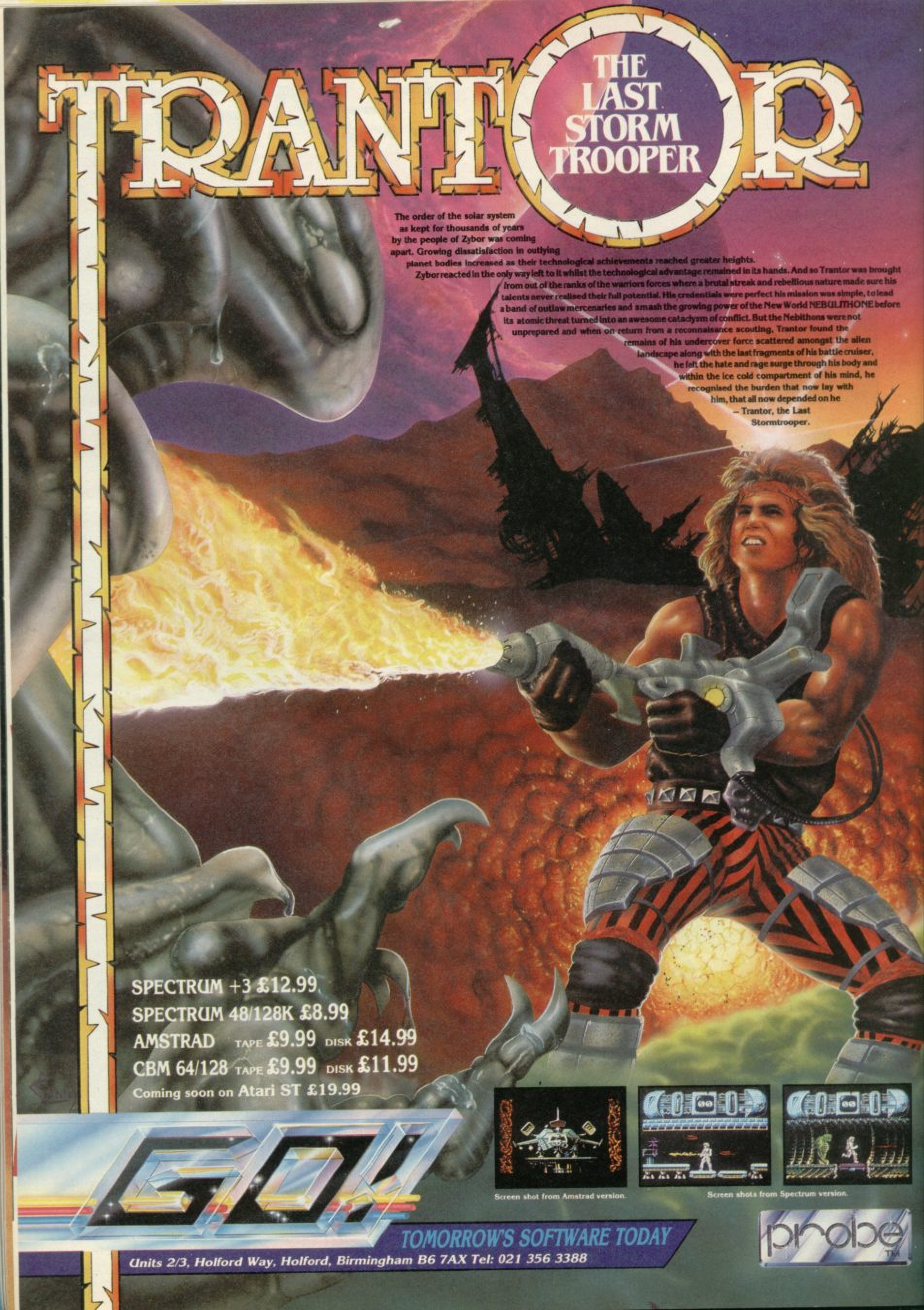
Highest new entry – just outside the top ten is Destructo from Bulldog. Next up, is Wolfen. And also climbing fast is the first release from Ricochet – a release on budget of Martech's rather unchallenging Eddie Kidd's Jump Challenge



▲ HOT: EDDIE KIDD



▲ HOT: DESTRUCTO


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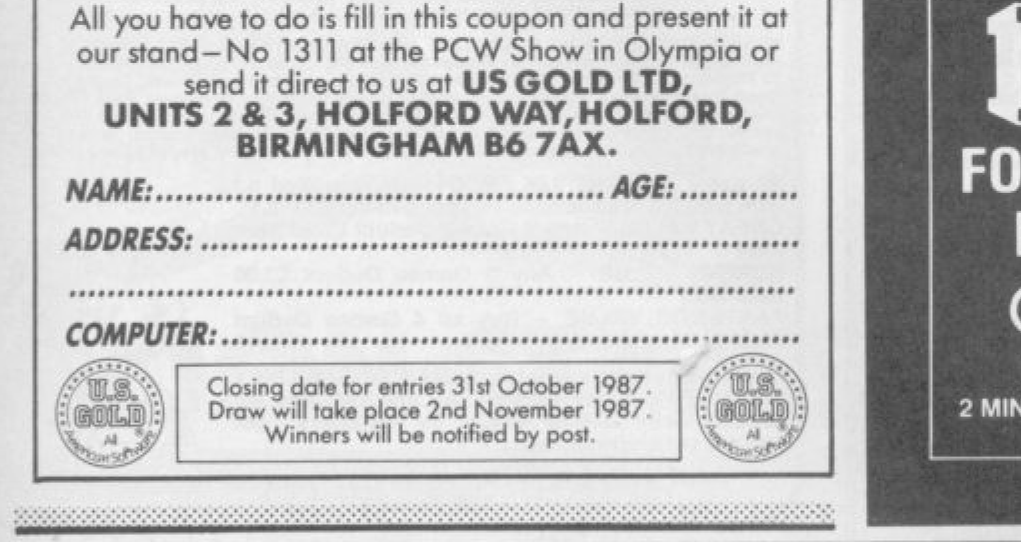
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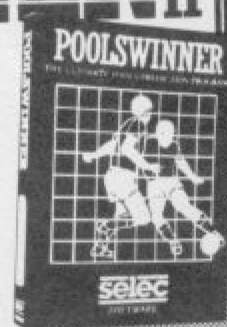
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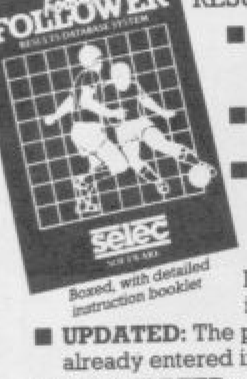
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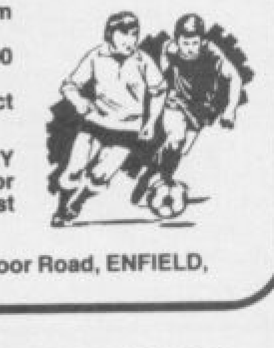
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COMPETITION

MOON STRIKE



Last month we raved over *Moon Strike* from Mirrorsoft. This month we give you the fantastically difficult incredibly bizarre but curiously addictive *Round Spaceship Puzzle Game Thing.*

Call it an executive toy. Call it a 3D puzzle. Call it Norman. We don't care.

Anyway whatever it is, we've got an awesome 100 of the little tinkers to give away. So if you enter this competition you're in with a pretty fair chance of winning one.

WIN A SPACE CAPSULE

MOON STRIKE

S	T	R	I	K	E	P	P	R	T	N	T
O	N	C	F	E	S	S	I	O	E	L	A
M	O	O	N	R	H	U	Z	W	E	A	C
O	V	I	I	M	Y	P	Z	H	T	T	H
V	O	N	R	T	R	E	A	E	H	I	Y
I	R	S	Y	F	A	L	S	E	B	G	O
E	T	O	G	L	N	V	U	M	S	I	N
M	E	O	A	C	I	K	O	O	E	D	D
Y	X	N	U	O	B	R	G	N	D	A	R
A	D	T	E	A	B	A	G	A	N	S	N
D	M	T	F	O	S	R	O	R	R	I	M
D	U	C	K	S	O	L	T	H	E	L	R

The Competition

We're tired of thinking up questions for competitions so we've produced instead a word square in which are stashed a number of words and phrases all of which have something to do with *Moon Strike*. All you have to do is find each of the words/phrases in the square and mark each one by circling around it with a pen. Words may be h rizontal or vertically placed

The Answer

When you have found all the hidden words and circled them you should find a phrase left over – what does it say?

The Word Square

To start you off the following ten words or phrases are somewhere in the square: Binary Innovations Mona Lisa Ducks Coins New Zealand Pizzas False Teeth Movie Load Tachyon Vortex Digital Teabag. Don't say we don't help ya!

What to do

If you think you've figured out the mysterious sentence which is formed by removing all the words listed above from the square write it together with your name and address into the form below and send it to SU Executive Toy Puzzle Thing, Competition Mega-control, EMAP, 14 Holkham Road, Southgate, Orton, Peterborough P62 0UF. Closing date is November 2nd.



◀ The thing they call the Round Spaceship Puzzle Thing. The future of home entertainment.

Name ....

Address ....

....

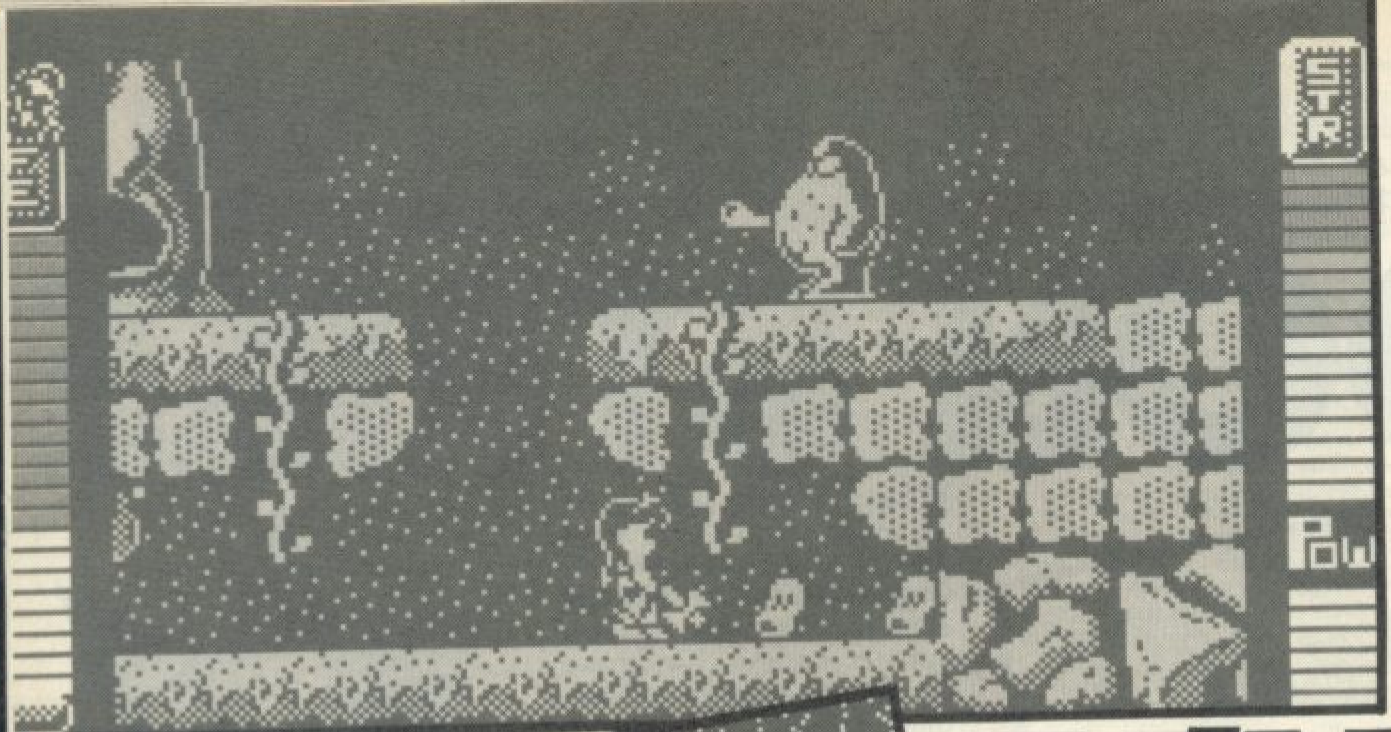
....

Mysterious Phrase ....

....

....

Mirrorsoft employees, Emappers and pizzas may not enter.





FACTS BOX

Lots of screens and good graphics. Unoriginal play, may be, but definitely one for the Zapchat high scores table

ATHENA
Label: Imagine
Authors: Andrew Deakin, Iran Horne
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Graham Taylor

ATHENA

How many games can you think of in which you had to play a woman that were also a big success? Though so. Why??

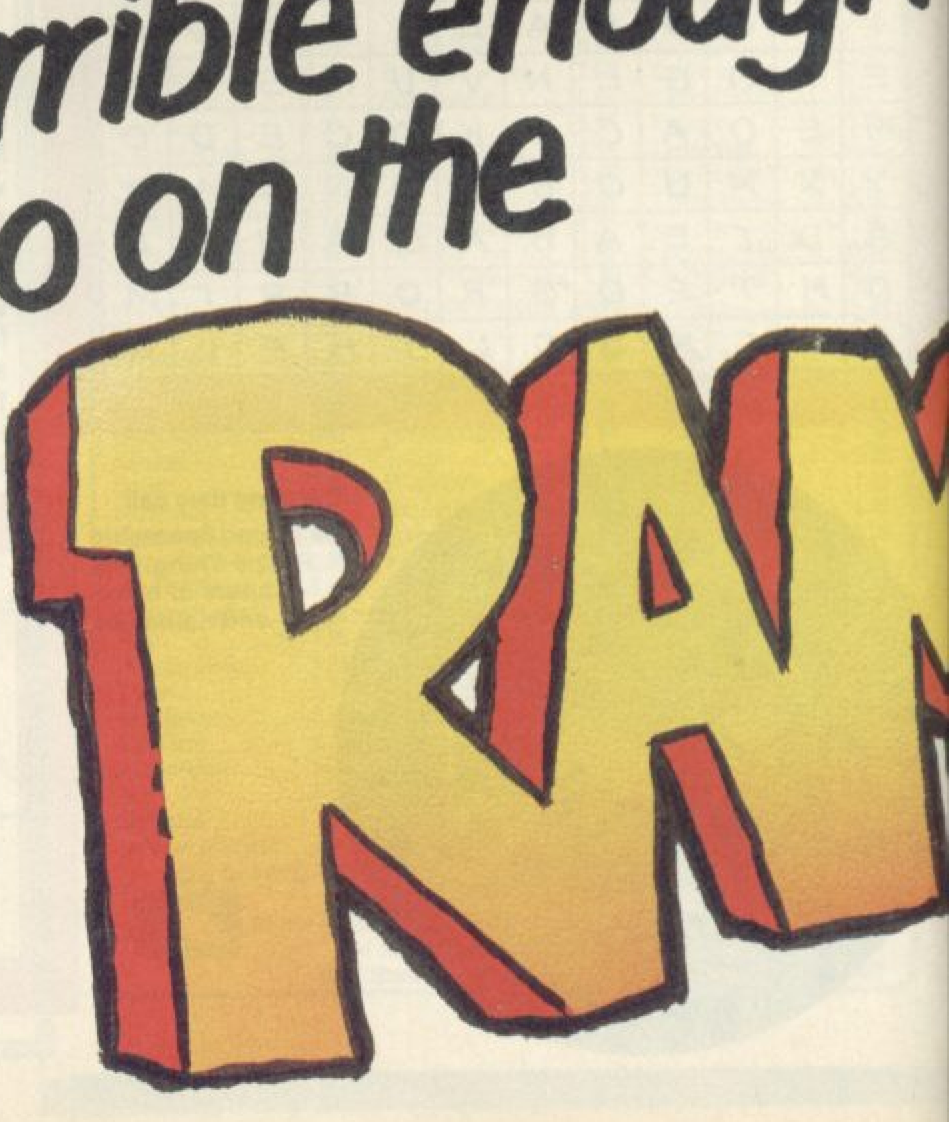
Anyway let's hope the same fate doesn't befall **Athena** it's an all-round good game.

If we were playing spot the trend I'd say that 'building up your firepower by collecting things' is flavour of the month.

In **Athena** you begin on uppercut power alone, but gradually build up until such things as axes and ball-and-chains increase your destructive capabilities markedly.

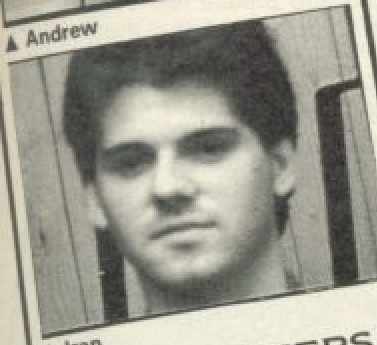
Incidentally, those foolish urchins who do strange things like leer over cassette inlays (cf **Barbarian**) will be disappointed that the sprite representation of **Athena** bears surprisingly little comparison with the original on

Are you horrible enough to go on the





▲ Andrew



▲ Iran

PROGRAMMERS

ANDREW DEAKIN and **IRAN HORNE** are relatively new to programming professionally. For **Athena** Andrew concentrated on the gameplay and Iran did the graphics.
SOFTOGRAPHY: **Labyrhinthian** (*Alligata*, 1986), **Megabucks** (*Firebird*, 1987)

the cassette inlay.

Anyway enough of this irrelevance. The game is played over six worlds – forest, sea, sky, ice, fire and hell. In each **Athena** pummels her way through, past countless peculiar aliens including big monsters and small potatoes (surprisingly vicious for root vegetables). She is looking for one of the two exits out of each world, one of which is protected by an enormous monster. Trash it for lots of points and, voilá, the next section.

Actually it isn't 'voilá the next section' because in 48K you have to load it from tape. It is, however, pretty quick.

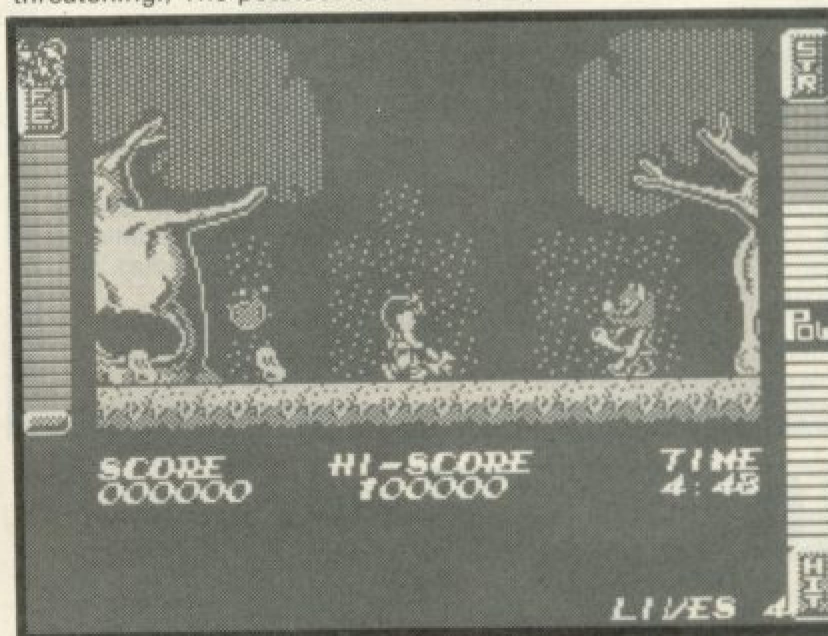
But **Athena** does more than trample aliens, she tramples rock itself. In a sort of bizarre varient on **Boulderdash, Athena** often has to clear vast amounts of landscape which block her path – and it means she sometimes has to choose her route through each world carefully.

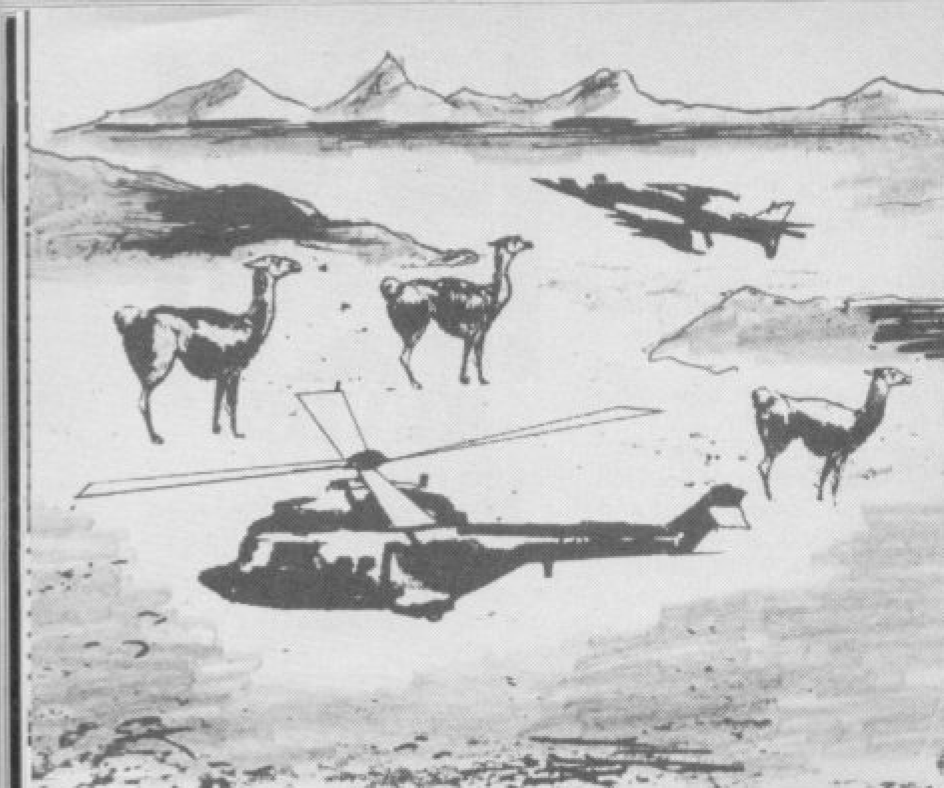
There are some curious aspects to the gameplay, too. You get five lives in the usual way but have to complete each level within a time limit. Assuming you are still within the time limit, you are offered the option of continuing with the game after all five lives have been lost. Press *Y* within 10 seconds and you're back to five lives again. Peculiar.

Having actually managed to get through the first level I can exclusively reveal that the next level is set in caverns and is very similar to the first level which is a forest. The caverns are yellow and the forest is green. In the forest section there are (seemingly) more baddies but in the caverns there are more 'shifting the rubble' type problems.

Graphics, though two-colour are pretty good with a fair amount of detail in both the sprites and backgrounds. The movement is smooth(ish) and some of the visual ideas are quite inventive. (A lot of the monsters, for example, look amiably doltish rather than threatening.) The potatoes are particularly nice.

Athena is the stuff of which high score letters to Jon Riglar are made. It won't win any awards for great innovations, but definitely take a look at it anyway■





I have this brill idea for a game. You're this helicopter pilot, see, flying low over the mountains of Afghanistan and mowing down peasants, priests, CIA agents and BBC reporters, whilst simultaneously dodging American red-eyes, British sidewinders and the occasional high-flying llama.

Great hey? I especially like the nerve gas and the cute little exploding toys for kiddies.

Ya? Nyet? N'yet.

Mike Davies London NW.

PS Sorry – It must have been something I ate.

008

I was reading your review of the new James Bond game, **Living Daylights**, when I noticed something strange in the Facts Box. There were eight stars in the box, but there was a big figure 7 at the side.

Now is Graham Taylor barmy, or can't he see that 5+3=8? or was it because it was 007 that you thought it ought to have a number 7 by it?

Could you please learn some maths? Didn't you know that 1+1=4?

Stephen 'Mathmetician' Hale
Canvey Island
Essex

Trusting to the post

I am writing to find if others have had problems with mail order software companies.

Having recently acquired a 128K+2 I was keen to get some software, and was very pleased when I saw that one nameless company was offering "Stars on the 128" at only £6.95. Well, my mum (female parent) phoned up, ordered, shelled out the dosh, and soon the game arrived. I was very disappointed/fed up (delete as desired) when two of the games, **D.I.'s Supertest** and **International Matchday** failed to load. We sent it back and asked for another copy, which we got, which also didn't work, which we sent back and requested a refund, which we didn't get – they didn't even bother replying to our letter. After a while we sent another letter and a copy of our first letter and they wrote back (hooray! That's something) saying that they had not received the game back. Well as you can imagine I was a bit angry and promptly rushed to my mum saying "Quick mum, where's the recorded delivery ticket?" She replied, "What recorded delivery ticket? I didn't send it by recorded delivery, why should I send it by recorded delivery? They didn't send it to you by recorded delivery."

I'm not saying they're lying but it seems strange to me that the two letters which didn't ask for my money back got there OK, but the one requesting a refund strangely didn't arrive.

Brian Cooper
Kildrum
Cumbernauld
Scotland

PS I have great faith in the British Postal service.

● *Anyone else had similar probs?*

SINCLAIR USER CLASSIC

Firstly, I would like to ask you to change the Classic logo back to its original style. It looked a good deal more elegant like that and I'm sure more people preferred it that way.

Secondly, why do you not answer or comment to the majority of letters? In the July '87 issue, 4 out of 20 letters bore an SU comment.

Thirdly, to James Newman of Amersham. Compilations feature in the budget chart because if a compilation is, say, £10, and contains 5 games, then each game will work out at £2 and will thus be a budget title. I hope I spoke on behalf of SU by saying that. (Didn't I. Didn't I...?)

Fourthly, I should like to congratulate you on your changing of the rating system. Ten is much better than five. Twice as good in fact.

M Richardson
Hazel Grove
Stockport

● *One – No. Two – No comment. Three – No, never thought of that one. Four – We know*

SINCLAIR CLASSIC USER

Sticky problem

I think your mag is brilliant, but when we get free gifts, why stick them to the front using Sellotape? Do you want us to rip our mags to pieces? Why not a paperclip? Otherwise, the gifts are great. So please, no more stupid yellow tape with FREE FREE FREE printed on it!

Yours freely

Martin Cowin
Kirkby Stephen
Cumbria

PS When does the Editor's car tax run out?

PPS Also, tell the Editor to sell me his office for an old 3p coin or I'll come round and blow his head off (completely!) with a bazooka.

Club forms for lap-tops

I am currently trying to start a Z88 Users' Club for owners of the new machine from Cambridge Computer. The club will be a spare-time activity, non-profit making and funded from members' contributions.

If any of your readers own the machine or have an interest in it, the Club newsletter will be a forum for ideas, information and programs. For further details please send a stamped self-addressed envelope to: Z88 Owners' Club, 68 Wellington Street, Long Eaton, Nottingham NG10 4NG

Roy A Woodward
Long Eaton
Notts



Please could you tell me what Greatbelly's Thingy is supposed to be because I am somewhat confused about it.

Steven Jones
Sudbury
Suffolk

● *So's he. And so are we. All is revealed – as it were – in this month's Gordo*

Some ramblings

As I was browsing through the July issue of SU, I came upon the letters.

You didn't reply to James Newman of Amersham re his complaint that £9.95 was hardly budget. The same applies to G E Jones of Hengoed, (good old Welsh name that boyo) never a word in reply, what could you say anyway, look you? You are hereby required to pull your flinning spoke up and get things right. This is not the first time I have taken you to task over your sloppiness, and it is time that SU was not only the best Computer Magazine published, but impeccable in its information and spelling. And whilst on that subject, if you decide to print this letter, please print all or none, not just that which makes me look the egotistic idiot you would like me to be, and which I probably am.

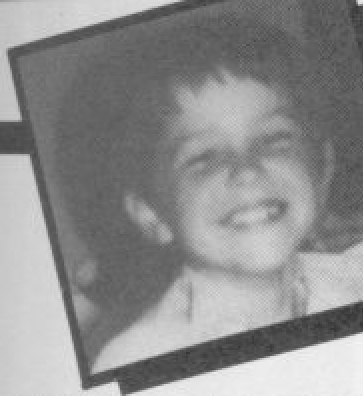
Incidentally, that peculiar wheel-like cycle with Chris Hubberley's letter fascinated me, I can imagine the results if the twit was to pedal, especially as he has no safety belt.

Do please also thank Adrian Singh for his Pokes.

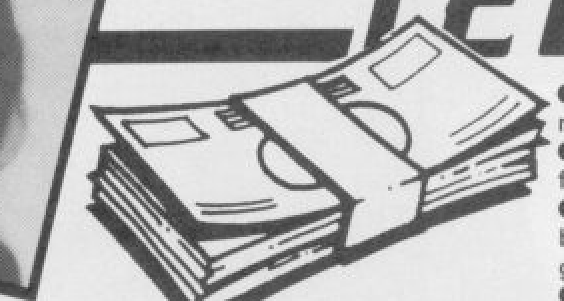
Cheers you young upstarts

Don Garment
Aylesbury
Bucks

● *Tough – we've only printed half your letter because it was too long – and also a bit boring in the middle.*







No Wonder . . . no cash

There are only two words to describe **Wonder Boy**: brilliant and fantastic. I can't stop thinking about it. I keep begging my mum to buy it but the answer was always a mean-looking "No".

I started to wonder about asking my mum about **Thing Bounces Back**. The answer to that would have been "No". When suddenly a tenner floats out of SU and all my worries about never getting a computer game ever again are over. What can I put in a review that I haven't even played. Anyway the game looks brilliant and I can't wait to get it.

Yes, I know this is a funny review but I haven't played the game yet. So, could you let me have the game and when I'm rather good at it I will write you a review. My sister wants Jet Set Willy and she wants you to let her have the game and when she's had a go on it she will write a review for you.

Paul and Phillipa Seamark
Langford
Bedfordshire
Game Choice: Wonder Boy

● *No, no, no! You seem to have got the whole idea of the Write Stuff confused. The idea is you write the review and then, if we like it we pay you. Not the other way around*

OK so I've got a few questions I want answered!

● Who is this SU bird whose name appears throughout the magazine?

● Fued is spelt F-E-U-D, see **Write Stuff** July SU.

● Your top twenty is fab, keep it forever!

● Extend the letters page.

● Please, please, please, print more colour screen shots.

● Get rid of the **Outlands** feature, it's rubbish.

● Hewson and Riglar are the business, double their pay, and give them more space.

● Who the hell is Dinamic? Too right, who the hell are they? Who knows... who cares?

● How dare you trash **Kick Boxing**, it's excellent, no game play, useless graphics and pyjama bottoms all for £1.99, thanks Firebird.

Take care of this little lot, and I'll buy the mag until Jon Riglar publishes a **Commando** Poke that works – sometime next century.

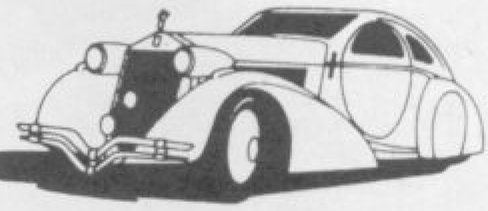
Julian Hardy
Walton-on-Thames
Surrey

PS I'm not the leader of any political parties.

PPS And I'm not related to Ollie. Figure that out.

● *There's only one answer to all of these questions: No.*





Utter, utter molluscs!!

Aaaargh!! How could you at SU make such a mistake? You fools! You idiots! You utter, utter molluscs!

I am of course referring to your Smash Offer coupon for **Barbarian** in the July issue.

Now let me see. The retail price of the game, £9.95, minus £1.50, the Smash Offer coupon comes to.....? Ah yes, of course, £8.45. £7.45? Well, that's what you said – and so the billions of people like me, who sent off for the game did not receive it. Instead (ages later) we got a letter from you, in which you grovelled and apologised, and said that enclosed with the letter were some cassette labels Oh, I though, that's nice of them. On looking for the cassette labels I came to the conclusion that they were either very small, or made of some sort of invisible material, or no, it couldn't be, oh, another MEGA BLUNDER!

M J Hodgkinson
Ellesmere
Shropshire

PS If you don't publish this letter, I'll be forced to send another letter revealing even more of your mistakes.

● *We're putting a brave face on the whole extraordinary episode . . .*



The Spectrum Cortina Mk 3

I wish someone could tell me which home computer has sold the most, and has the most software and hardware support.

I feel the Spectrum plus 3 will have the same support and longevity of all Spectrums and therefore be a better buy than an Amstrad 6128 which doesn't seem to have the same level of support or even the cheap software. And now the Atari will be £299 with disc, mouse and monitor (but very little cheap software) not games.

What would your advice be? All I want is a machine which will be better supported than the others. This I feel is reasonable as there must be a machine that has been the winner in this race. Is it a Spectrum or an Amstrad? Surely there's a Ford Cortina of the computer world.

P. J. Morley
Whittlesey
Cambridgeshire

● *If there's a Ford Cortina of the computer world then I guess it is probably the Spectrum. More Spectrums are sold than any other home micro and the machine accounts fo over 40 per cent of software sales (by volume) – by far the largest share of any machine.*

Indie's Mad twin?

The worst has happened! I keep telling myself it can't be true, but it is. You've printed reviews on the back of the poster! Now how can my wall wear 'MAG MAX' while I decide whether **'The Big Sleaze'**, **'Mutants'** and **'Triaxos'** are worth buying?

There's more, for a few months you had an almost perfect top twenty page. This month I turned to p38 to see how the budget games were doing against the rest, and I couldn't!

Not yet have I finished. It's getting steadily harder to find anything on the contents page, especially with Indiana Jones and The Mad Celt (Gareth and Indiana – surely they're not related?) slapped all over it.

What has happened? Has the Ed had a personality change and now lets the Mad Celt do anything he wants?

Yours in dismay
Karl Barrow
9 Dorset Close
Hamsworth
West Yorks WF9 5HU

Dom's demise

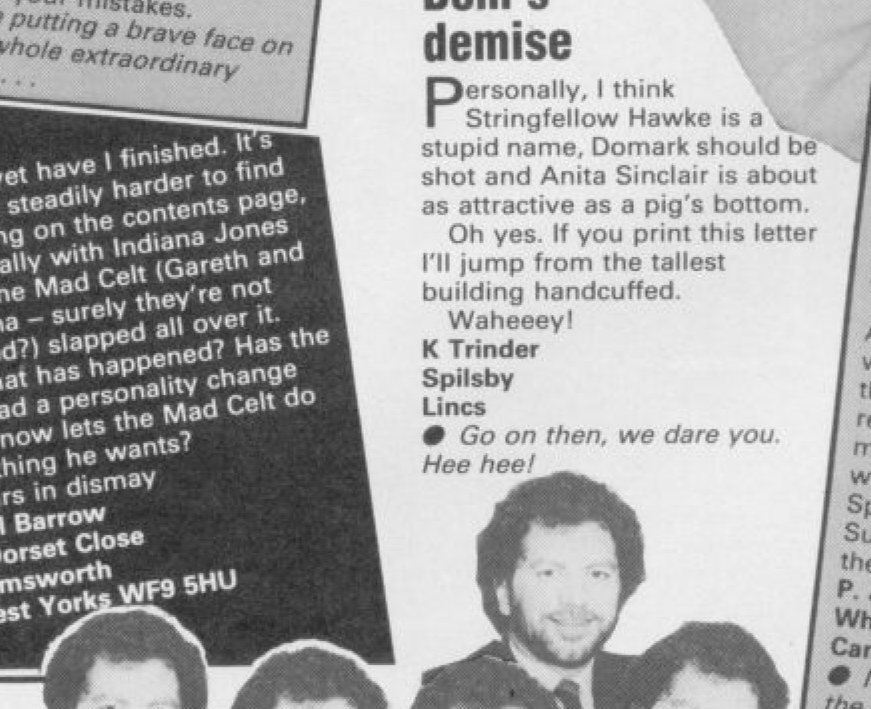
Personally, I think Stringfellow Hawke is a stupid name, Domark should be shot and Anita Sinclair is about as attractive as a pig's bottom.

Oh yes. If you print this letter I'll jump from the tallest building handcuffed.

Waheeey!

K Trinder
Spilsby
Lincs

● *Go on then, we dare you. Hee hee!*



Fuzzy face

In response to Patrick Downes letter (SU 65), you asked why everyone at Amstrad had a beard.

I have, after many long months of thought, and intensive periods of research, reached the following conclusion. It's to keep their chins warm.

P Howard
Crawley
West Sussex

● *Never thought of that one!*

FACTS BOX

Budget adventure with lot's of good points including tricky puzzles and an inventive icon command system

SHARD OF INOVAR
Label: Buldog
Authors: Clive Wilson, Les Hogarth
Price: £1.99
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K

Reviewer: Graham Taylor

8





SHARD of INOVAR

Many centuries ago when the Earth was still evolving, a plague known as 'adventure game blurb' fell upon the land. Every month new adventures would appear with ever more awful and tedious plots. **Shard of Inovar** has the lot.

An Elfin race called Eharin from the realm of Mantierion made the Inovar which is an elfstone which could defend the world from the plague called Nagroma.

You play Varwield Secunda and you've got to get the Shard which is in bits and there are people called Sunguat, Kiron and Rimarlion and..., listen I can't take any more of this stuff where people make silly pixie names up. (GT's instant pixie name creator – take the names of two household cleansing products eg Ajax and Vim, mix them together and what do you get – Vijax, thirteenth dark lord of the inner circle of chaos. So enough of all this sillyness. Let's have heros called Chris and Maureen.)

Anyway all that stuff was pretty irrelevant because the actual game **Shard of Inovar** is really good. Some of its ideas are geniunely original and some of the puzzles are quite inventive. Not only that but it's on budget too.

Shard of Inovar is an icon-driven adventure. Most of the previous icon-driven efforts have been pretty unsuccessful. Choosing whether and what to *Take, Drop, Examine* or whatever by whizzing around the screen highlighting icons representing the command takes at least as long as typing *Get Frog,* or whatever.

The clever stuff in **Shard** works like this. You move around the usual grim magical landscape using icon commands but when you come across something interesting eg The evil tower of Domjax (Domestos and Ajax) and the text screen says 'Ahead rises the evil Tower of Domjax' – you choose the *Examine* icon, another text window says *'Examine* the ..', then you highlight the word from the descriptive text using a cursor and check out the tower. Since it is almost always the descriptive text for a location that tells you that there might be something to investigate this is an obvious but very effective idea. Can't think why nobody thought of it before.

There are graphics for most locations but they occupy less than a quarter of the screen and are little more than decoration.

Rated purely in terms of difficulty of puzzles and inventiveness, **Shard of Inovar** also scores highly. From the start location it takes only about three paces in any of the available compass directions before you're in deep trouble. And some of it is not only deep but squishy too!

I hated the blurb, the plot is utterly tedious, but **Shard of Inovar** has some good puzzles and some genuinely original command input ideas. On budget it's definitely a goodie■

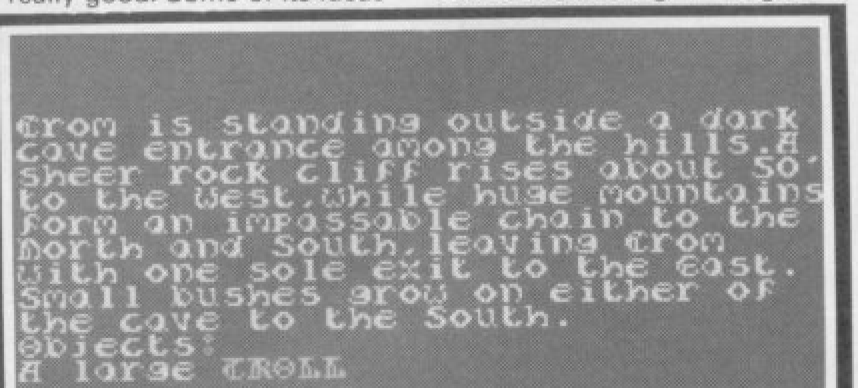
PROGRAMMERS
CLIVE WILSON and **LES HOGARTH** are the team responsible for **Shard of Inovar.** They have worked together creating adventures for Mastertronic since 1985. SOFTOGRAPHY: **Se-Kaa of Assiah** *(Mastertronic, 1985),* **Zzzz** *(Mastertronic, 1986),* **Kobyashi Naru** *(Mastertronic, 1987)*

CROM

Crom, for those of you who haven't had the pleasure of meeting him, is an expletive. Conan the Barbarian tends to call upon the services of **Crom** when in trouble or perplexed by something which is, basically, all the time.

But in this package, Celerysoft has nicked the name for the barbarian hero of their four-part text-only adventure game.

Anyway, I'm sure you can imagine the sort of thing that's going on here: 'and lo, Crom the Barbarian, mighty warrior, was wrecked upon the shores of a strange land, cast naked and alone upon the sand. And he didst gird his loins and go forth to do battle against the evil ones and the ones who were almost as bad, and lo he did win (on about the fiftieth attempt).



Crom is big. We're talking a two-tape, four-Load package. Each time you load in one of the four parts, you have to type in a code – yes even at the beginning! The code at the start of the game is an easy one, especially as Celerysoft gives it to you in the cassette insert. Come to think of it, it'd be pretty stupid if they didn't, wouldn't it? Presumably, it's some sort of anti-copying device.

It's a standard text-only adventure, with all the usual trimmings that we have come to expect of such things. There's little point running through what you are going to meet in **Crom** as, firstly, they are the sort of items and locations that you will find in a hundred other adventures, and, secondly, as I haven't been able to finish part one, I haven't seen anything of part two let alone three and four, so I'd be giving you a very limited picture.

While the text isn't up to Infocom standards, say, or Level 9, it is still pretty good. Puzzles, likewise. Put it all together, and you have a very big, very competent adventure that is likely to absorb a lot of adventuring time■

FACTS BOX

Enormous four-part text-only adventure with a good fantasy setting, Excellent text and puzzles. Excellent value for the money

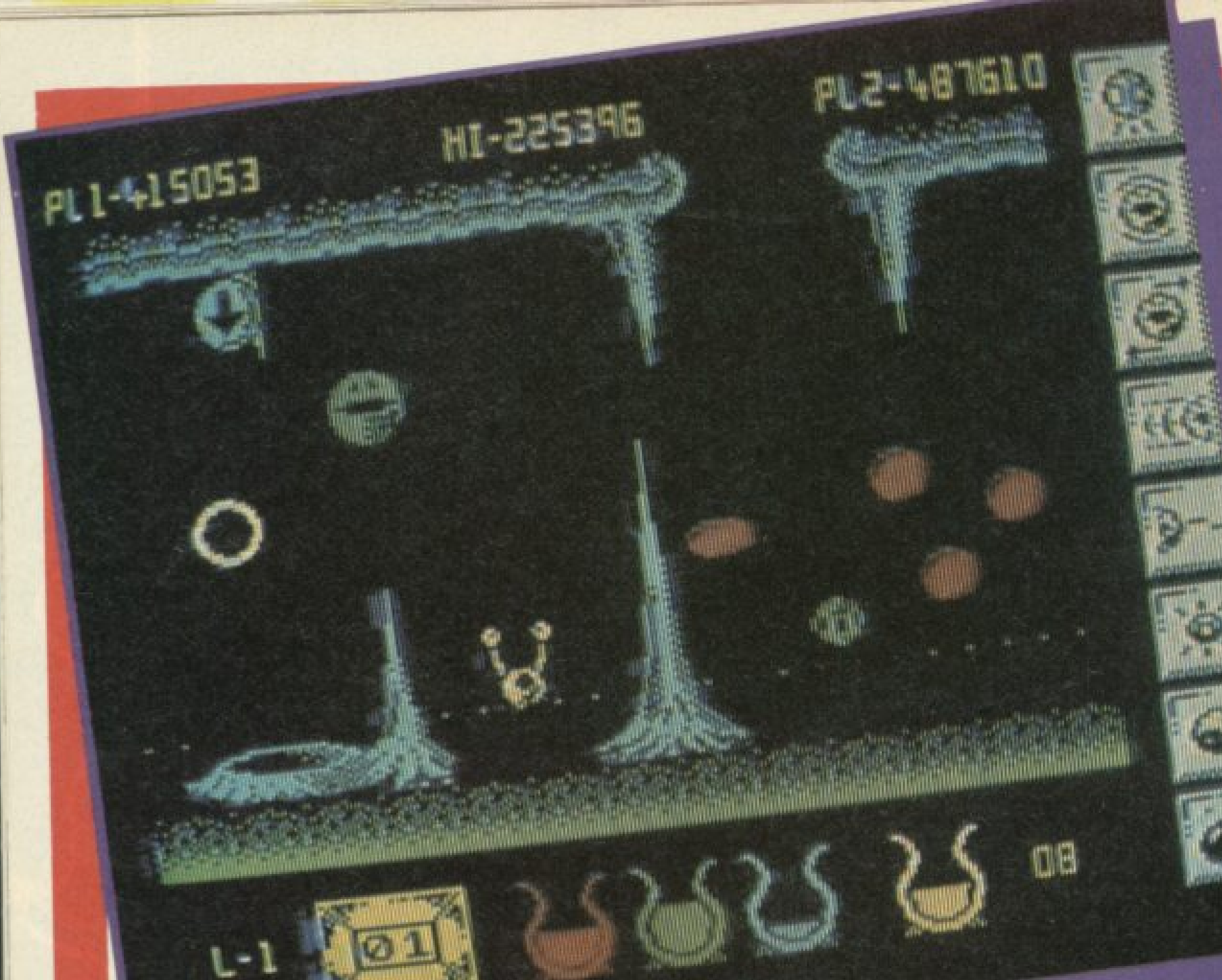
CROM
Label: Celerysoft, Slough House, Bishops Nympton, South Moulton, North Devon EX36 4NZ
Price: £4.50
Memory: 48K/128K

Reviewer: Gary Rook

7



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FACTS BOX

Strangely wonderful arcade blast. Frenetic stick-waggling of the highest quality. Splendid graphics too.

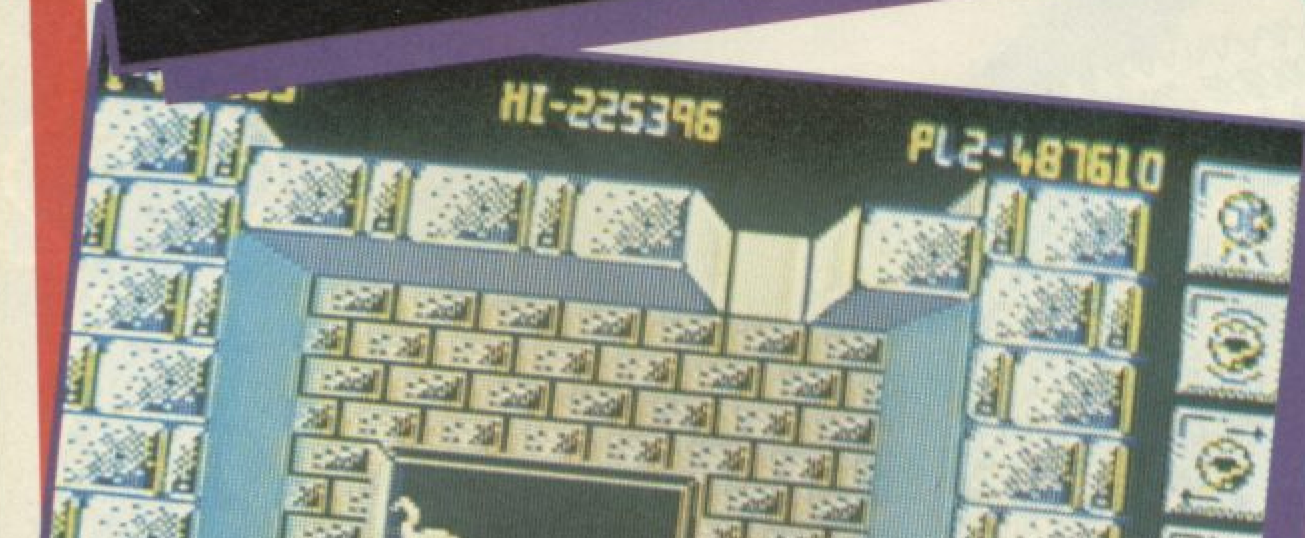
WIZBALL
Label: Ocean
Author: in-house
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: Various

Reviewer: Tim Douglas

★★★★★★★★★★ 10

If you're looking for a cracking arcade style game with more inventive ideas than just about everything else around at the moment put together, Ocean's **Wizball** could be the business.

How to describe it? It's a



W

complex left-right bouncing thing – with interlinking tunnels. It's as infuriating as any Ultimate game ever was – to start with you haven't a clue what's going on.

So what's it all about? The world you find yourself dropped into has been drained of all its colour by the evil Zark. To trash the monochrome madman you've got to collect up drops of paint you find scattered around the surreal environment to fill up your paint pots.



I'm sure you won't be too surprised to learn this is a whole lot more tricky than it sounds... Your Wiz object, looking remarkably like a





ARCADE REVIEW

IZBALL

CLASSIC

curious giant pea, starts off bouncing and rolling along and is extraordinarily difficult to control.

In action on the planet's surface you come up against numerous infuriating obstacles resembling stalagmites and stalagtites. While the obstacles themselves are quite inoffensive, Wiz's movement in the early stages (bouncing high in the air and ricocheting off everything in sight) makes it horribly infuriating.

You quickly discover what you really need is a more precise way to control Wiz. Just as well then there's a strip of icons all the way down the right-hand side of the screen, each enabling you to control Wiz in a more precise manner. Lawks. Now there's a stroke of good fortune.

There are seven options in all, though some can be activated twice in order to enhance their initial enhancement, if you see what I mean.

Obviously, you're not going to be allowed to simply skip through the icons at will. In order to highlight one, you need to wipe out an alien which will change into a green circle. By flying Wiz into the circle, the icon box will turn blue, indicatingthat it can be selected should you choose to do so. Then, to select the icon, you've got to waggle the joystick furiously left and right for a second.

All this could be rather overwhelming and, in a moment of uncharacteristic generosity, the programmers have given you an assistant – called Catelite. By working your way to the third icon and hitting *Fire*, a Cat (disguised as a small pea) will be summoned up. You could be forgiven for thinking that a cat wouldn't be of great help in a game like this. You'd be totally wrong. Cat is completely invaluable. He'll follow you around and gallantly throw himself (on your command) into the alients.

OK, so you've flown around and shot some things and got quite handily tooled up, thank you. So how do you go about getting the colour back into Wizworld? Easy, some of the sprites, when shot will change into drops of colour which can be picked up by Cat. As you zoom around, picking up the correct colour (indicated by a cauldron on the bottom of the screen) the little pots (check out the screens here) will gradually fill up.

As for gadding about, there's some mapping needed, if you're that way inclined.

There are tubes in the surface of the Wizworld lunescape which lead to other levels. The deeper the level, the more ferocious the aliens. Since it's possible to return to an early level from a tougher one, you can build up the colour pots as you go, without having to complete one level in one go. This means, first, it's very playable and, second, it's quite a challenge.

Though simple to look at, everything moves smoothly and the scrolling is flawless. Should you be fortunate enough to become totally equipped with all the icons, you can wreak immense havoc on the aliens.

Wizball is virtually flawless. It's addictive qualities, combined with super-smooth graphics and highly original gameplay make it one of the very best games to appear this year. A classic■



HINTS AND TIPS

● Stick with the first level 'til you've got the hang of controlling Wiz

● Don't move on to the later levels before properly equipping yourself with Cat and some better firepower

● Select your extra options carefully. It's often better to get Cat (Icon 3) before doubling your supa-beam (Icon 2)

● Use Cat to your advantage. Make him block the on-coming aliens as well as scooping up their colour

● Move slowly. You only need to race around when there are too many aliens for Cat to deal with

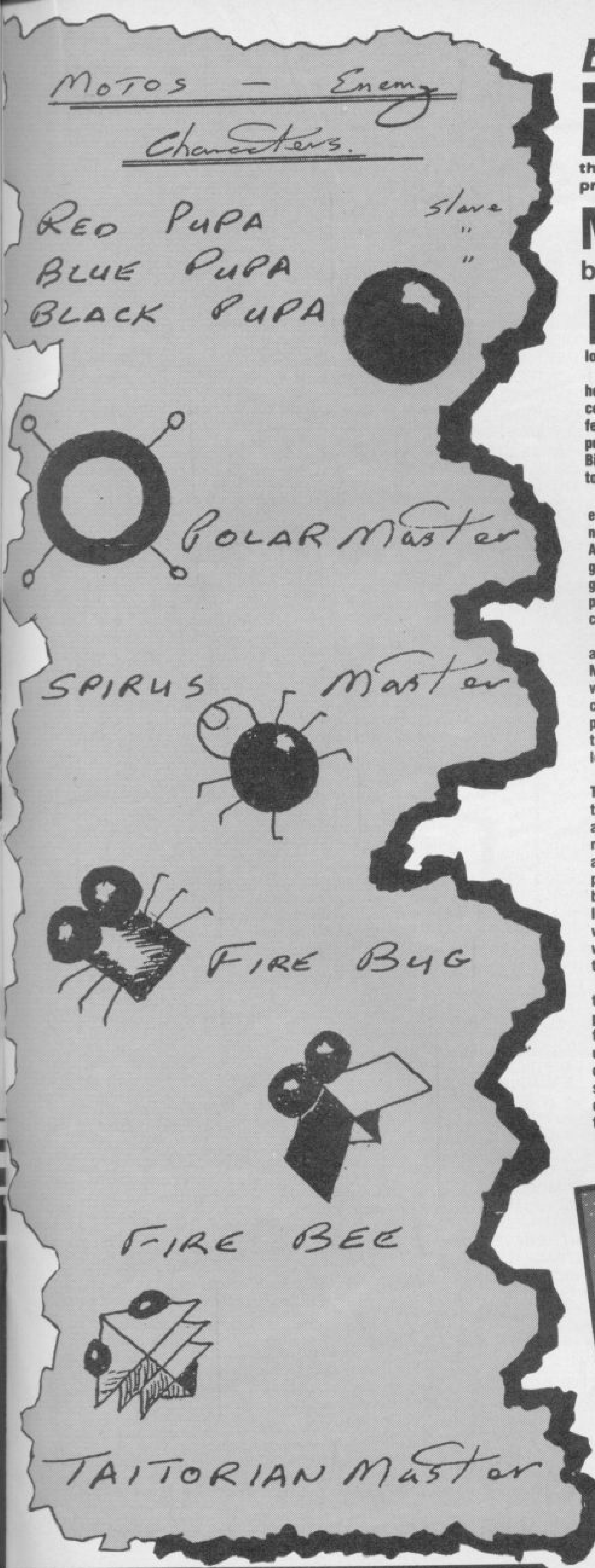








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BACKGROUND NOISE

Background Noise looks behind the top games of the moment and speaks to the programmers who sweated blood to produce them. Background Noise looks from the author's point of view — at the particular programming problems and the way they were solved

MOTOS

by Binary Design



Motos was the first coin-op conversion Binary Design worked on and we learnt a lot in the process of doing it.

The philisophies behind and hence the techniques required for coin-op/arcades projects are so different to those for home computer projects that a new division at Binary Design has now been created to specialise in coin-op projects.

The Motos project took, in the event three months and set us a number of complex problems. Although the playing areas in the game are relatively simple and the gameplay straight forward Motos poses problems not found in the conventional shoot-em-up.

I worked on Motos directly from an in-house arcade machine which Mastertronic supplied for the conversion work. It proved possible to copy the original arcade graphics pixel by pixel from coin-op to Spectrum and the end result therefore looks pretty authentic.

More complex was the gameplay. Though a simple idea in essence, the movement of the balls and other aliens had to have an authentic momentum and interact with one another according to the laws of physics. The gameplay would only be right if objects moved correctly. In the event getting this right involved giving each object a 'key weight' which was scaled according to the size of the graphic.

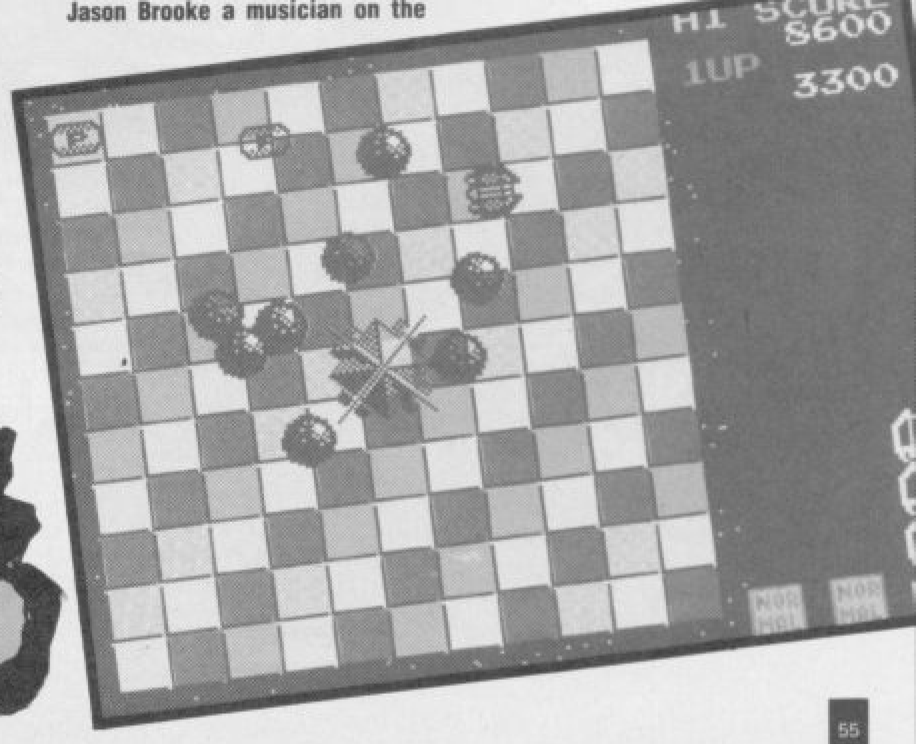
Getting a large number of sprites to move around was an additional problem. In order to avoid screen flicker as movement positions are up-dated it was necessary to use a dummy Ram screen on which new screens could be drawn before dumping them across to screen Ram to up-date the TV picture.

Jason Brooke a musician on the Binary Design staff was responsible for the implementation of sound in the game. Since there was no musical score to work from he had to work directly from the arcade game. Somehow he managed to copy almost all the music and the sound effects just by listening to them!

Although there were plenty of technical challenges along the way the real test of the conversion was playability. Did the Spectrum version feel right to play – just like the coin-op? That's always the hardest bit to get right and we spent a long time making slight changes to the game which made little apparent difference to the look or basic gameplay but were just slight 'tweaks' that we felt made the feel that bit more authentic.

Quite subtle coding changes sometimes produced dramtic improvements in the play of the game but we were pretty pleased with the end result■

Mathew Rhodes
Binary Design



Computer Music at it's best...



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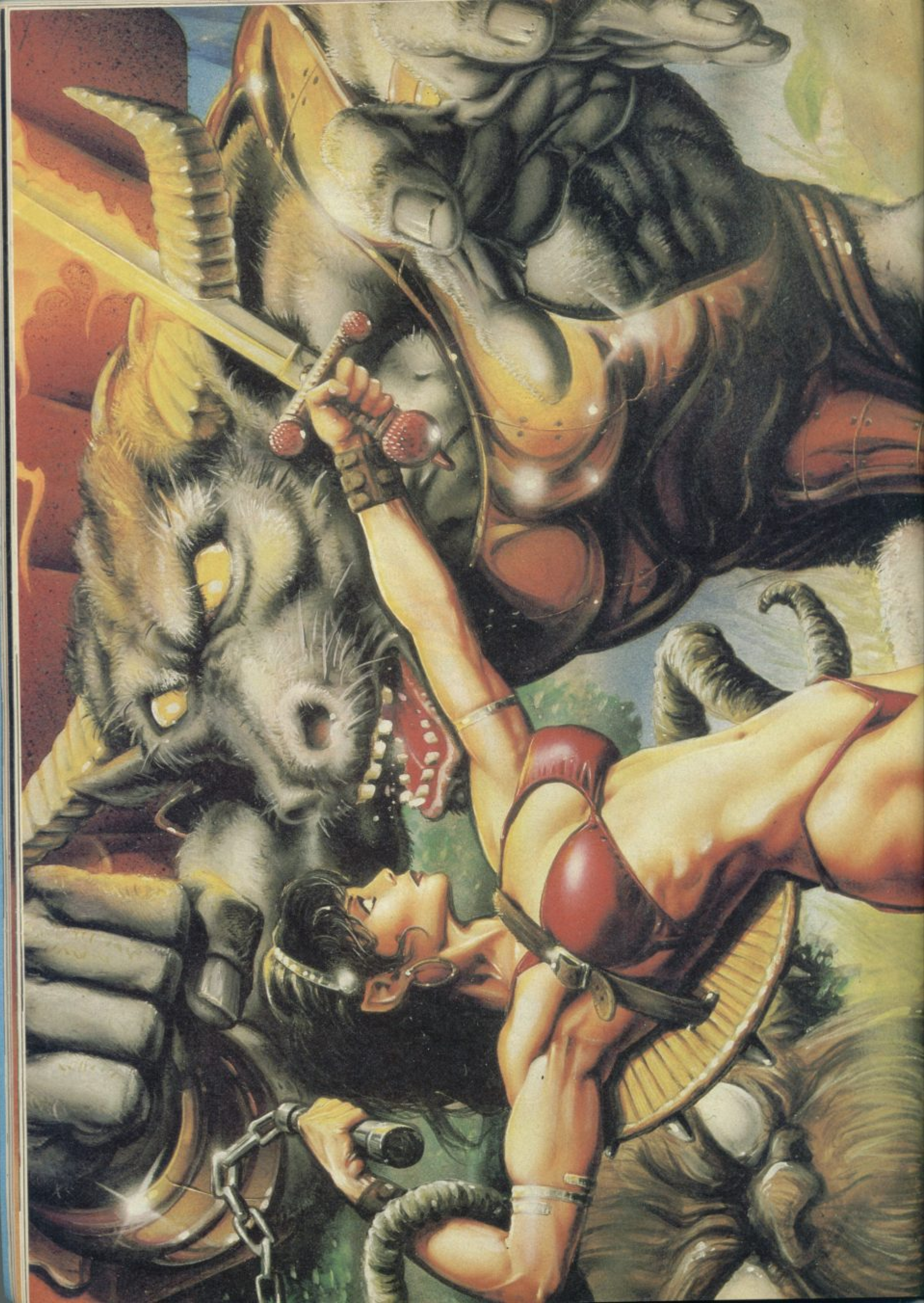
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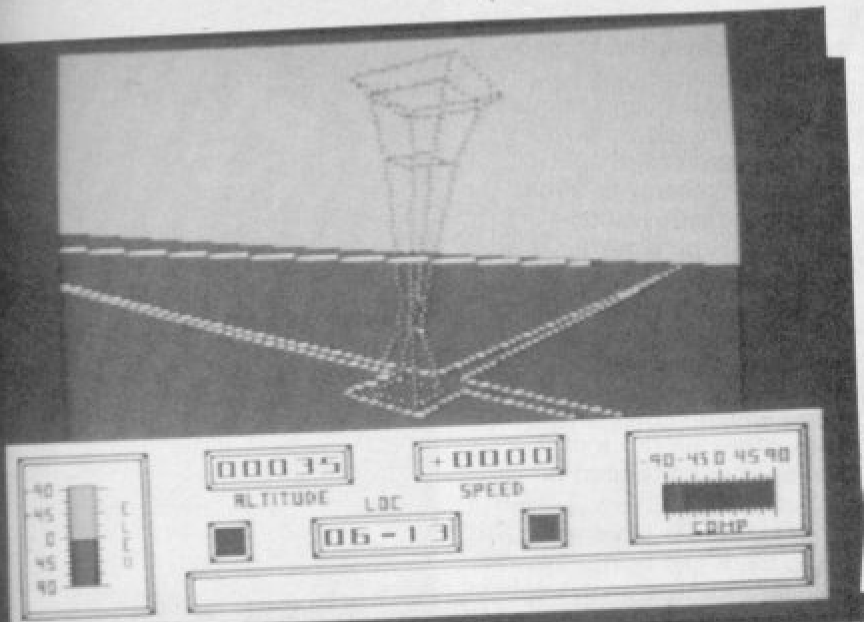
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FACTS BOX

Strategic futuristic graphic adventure. Mix of vector graphic simulator and 3D maze game. Well worth the wait

MERCENARY
Label: Novogen
Author: David Aubrey Jones
Price: £9.95
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K

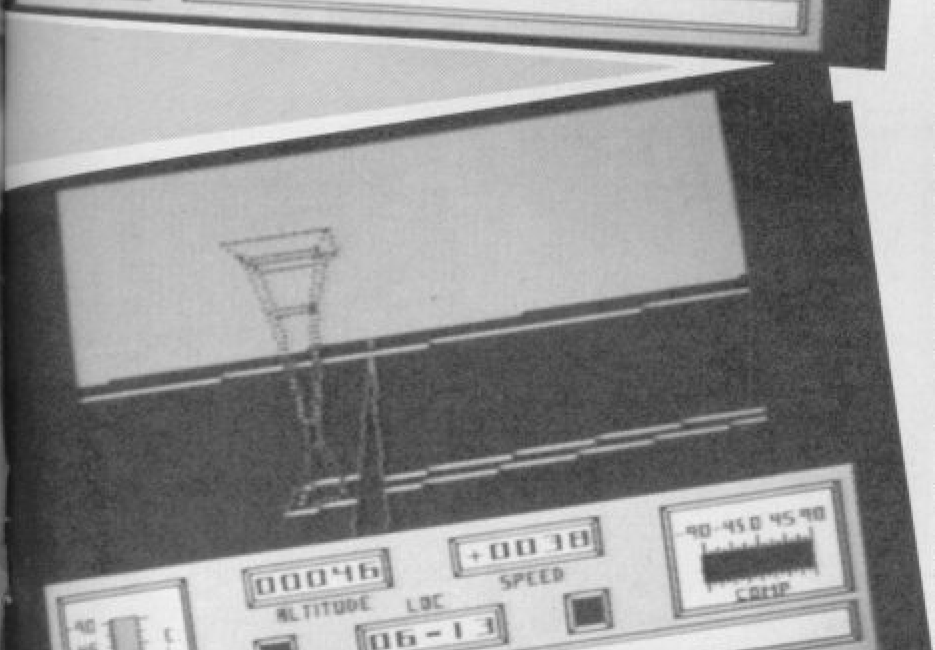
Reviewer: Jim Douglas

★★★☆☆
★★★☆☆ 8

STRATEGY SIMULATION REVIEW

MERCENARY





It's 3D city this month, isn't it? What with **Gunship** finally arriving from the Microprose people and all.

Mercenary, too, has been a long time in the making. A couple of years ago, there was a right old commotion kicked up about the C64 version, with people saying it was the best game ever and other such nonsense. Well, I say nonsense, but I can't think of another game, even **Elite,** which has maintained its reputation and notoriety with quite the same success as **Mercenary**.

You are a soldier-for-hire, who'll do anything if the price is right – used to screwing people every which-way and running like crazy once you've got the cash in your pocket.

To cut a long story short, you find yourself stranded on Targ with no money and a written-off space-ship. To escape, you have to buy yourself a ship big enough to break out of Targ's unusually strong gravitational pull. Such ships don't come cheap.

Information about Targ can be obtained by listening to Benson, your mini-computer assistant who lives in your helmet. Benson is a bit like a cut-down *Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy,* except he doesn't have Don't Panic written on him, and he doesn't have much of a sense of humour. Anyway, Benson informs you that the Palyars were the original and rightful inhabitants of Targ, and that they were moved out and opressed and generally mistreated by a bunch of bullies from another galaxy called the Mechanoids. So. Why not see if you can sell your combat skills to the Playars? Kick out the Mechanoids, and give them back their planet. They're graphics are astoundingly fast. Much quicker than on the C64, coming close to the speed of the ST version.

Targa isn't a small place. The Central City is the most interesting place to explore. You can enter all of the buildings and have a good old nose around in search of, well, I'm not quite sure what you're in search of. Clues. Yes, that's it. You're in search of clues to help you to investigate all the buildings and initially try to make contact with the Palyars. From then on, you're very much on your own.

Around the city are points of interest such as the Science Museum, where information can be gleaned as to the previous developments in Targ's engineering and electronic history. Benson's memory banks can be investigated to see if any particular item or place holds valuable properties/ information.

During play, you can progress through various ships, each having their own advantages or disadvantages. All of the craft, though, have to be abandoned when venturing underground. This is where the game really comes into its own, and you realise that, as well as being a very competent space-flight simulator, it's a great 3D maze game. You wander through corridors, trying to pass through locked doors etc. Some of the rooms act as teleport zones and you can use them to beam around the planet.

Mercenary is a rather amazing game. It crams so much in strategy-wise and still manages to incorporate more speed than you would imagine possible. It's a very polished chunk of programming■

bound to reward you.

Off you go, then, into the vector line-graphic landscape. Walking around is very tedious, so you should try and pinch or buy someone's hopper-craft to speed up travel a little. The

PROGRAMMER

DAVID AUBREY JONES has been commercially programming on the Spectrum for around three years. Having successfully converted **Mercenary** to the Amstrad, he was set to work on the Spectrum version. (The program's original author **PAUL WEEKES** is so reclusive, noone knows anything about him.)
SOFTOGRAPHY: **Galaxian** (*Atari,* 1984), **Hero** (*Activision,* 1985), **Deathstar Interceptor** (*System 3,* 1986), **Tornado Low Level** (*Vortex,* 1986 – Amstrad version)

ARCADE REVIEW

HYBRID

There are quite a lot of games quite a bit like **Hybrid**. I 'spose that's why Starlight decided to call it what they did . . .

Here's the plot: mankind's big hope of saving itself from eternal tyranny and misery is not, in fact, Col Oliver North – but you. Yep, you get to control the three robots that will save the world.

Inside a high security gaol live four horribly dangerous aliens. You need to kill them. In order to do this you need to move your three specialised robots to one of four special locations within the gaol where they can unite to do battle.

Getting the three robots through to the 'join-up' cells is no easy matter since the gaol area is simply teeming with laser defences, assorted aliens, cannons, impassable energy fields and lots of other things that make bleeping noises.

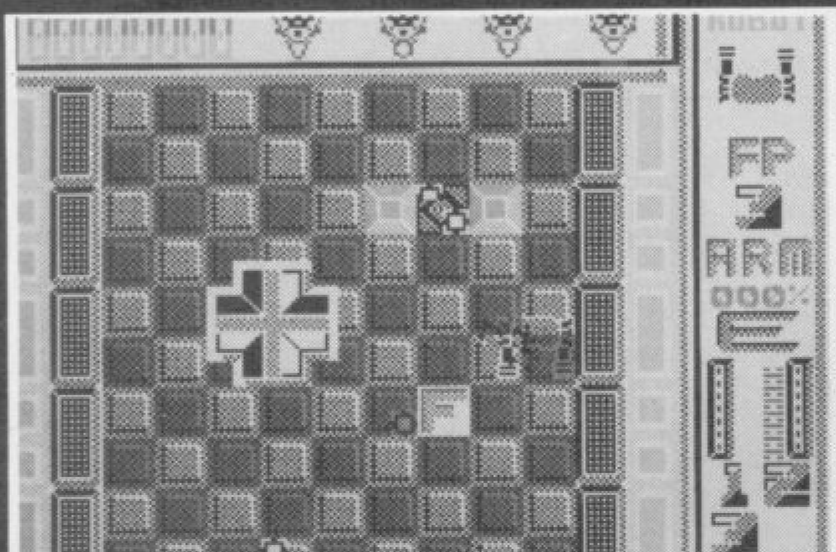
In some places the way is blocked to all but the smallest robot, in other areas only the biggest robot can deal with the more fiendish defensive systems.

Playing the game is therefore partly a matter of judging which robot to use when and then working your way through the gaol blasting and dodging. Each robot has separate levels of energy and fire power which may be augmented by passing through special squares in the gaol. Should one robot run out of steam it is possible to transfer energy between robots and revitalise it.

It's not a bad mixture of arcade and strategy but it doesn't look very spectacular – there's a squarish look to the playing screens, relatively unexciting designs for the robots (which do however move quite smoothly) and the various sections of the gaol all look pretty much the same. True there isn't much attribute clash but then you'd hardly expect it on a game with shapes as essentially basic as this.

If every there was a case for a mid-price game this is it. It isn't very original, it doesn't look spectacular, but it has quite a large playing area and could be fun for those who get pleasure out of lengthy mapping exercises.

They have more patience than I, though! ■



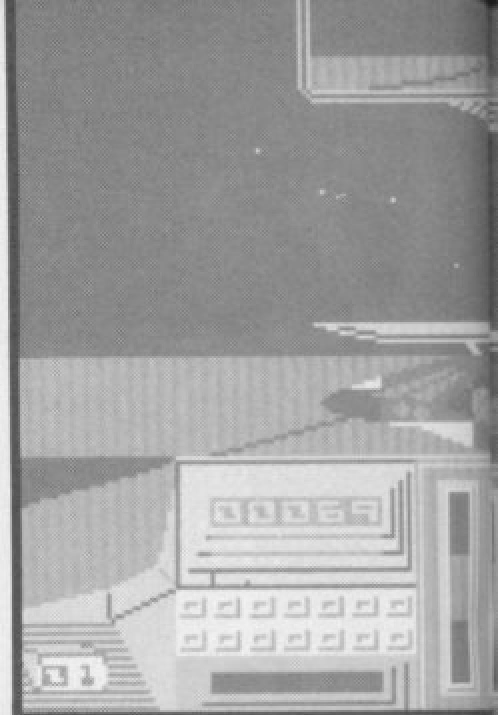
FACTS BOX

Bad points: average gameplay and graphics. Good points: interesting mix of arcade and strategy

HYBRID
Label: Ariolasoft
Author: Starlight
Price: £8.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Tamara Howard

★★★☆☆ **6**



DEAD R

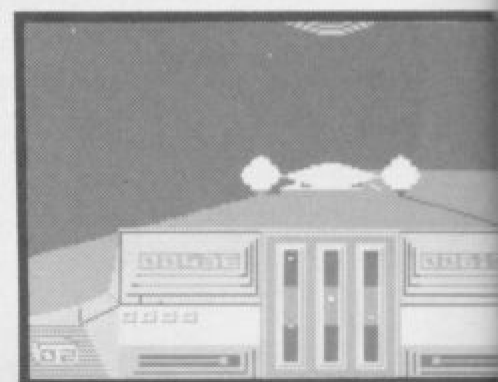
Welcome to **Dead Ringer** – a slam-bam space-age race game – tearing around a giant four lane, doughnut shaped track. It's a roller-coaster ride in space where the object is to avoid obstacles, destroy your opponents, and clock up the fastest lap time.

Your racer is an armoured skimmer, equipped with the most powerful lasers your sponsors could buy and a radar device which shows any obstructions on three of the four lanes either ahead or behind you.

Your skimmer is versatile – it has to be. It can hurtle fowards or backwards and switch racing lanes with a flick of the joystick.

You can race on any of the four lanes but the outside edge, notches up the most points because on it you'll be racing blind – your radar can't reach that part of the track. It's best to spend only short periods out there!

Hazards include mines, which you can destroy or avoid with skill, Warp Gates which zap your speed so that your Skimmer becomes



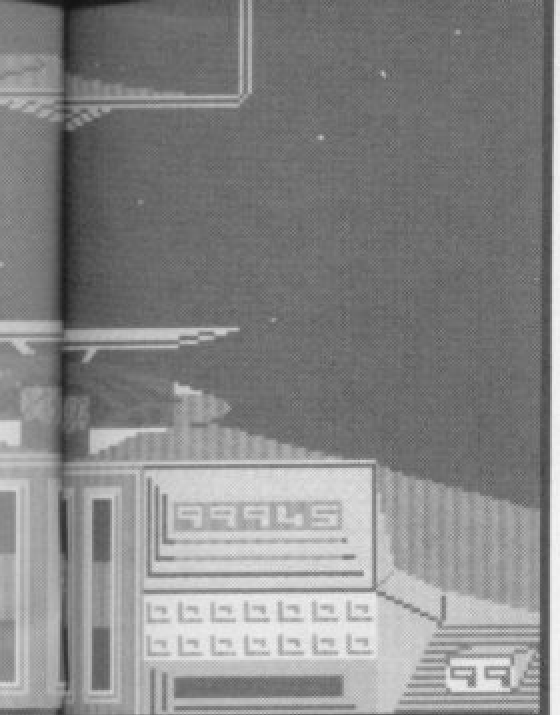
SUR

This game is so similar to the *Alien* movies in graphical style and plot that I completely refuse to believe that it wasn't intended to be *Alien* in the beginning. Anyway, taking the role of a seriously endangered alien, you've got to wander around an 'enormous' (142 screens) ship, collecting pods and plopping them into an incubator unit.

All that you seem to do throughout the game is wander through the corridors (which, it has to be said, are rather attractively laid out) spitting a mouthful of acid or two at the numerous aliens which wibble around along the floor and picking up the odd pod as you come to it. The gameplay is very much tried and tested, involving left, right, *Fire* and jump, and the trip in the occasional lift.

This may not sound particularly exciting and, well, it's not really, because despite the rather pleasing graphics





FACTS BOX

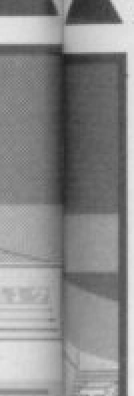
Fast paced, high octane, race set in space. The course is like a roller coaster and the obstacles come thick and fast

DEAD RINGER
Label: Reaktor
Price: £4.95
Author: Lance Mason
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Jim Douglas

★★★★☆ 8

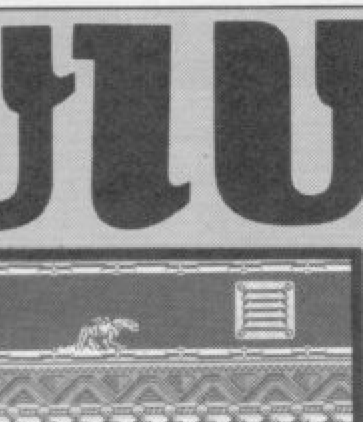
RINGER



uncontrolable, and walls which'll flatten you unless you skip to the next lane to avoid them. There are also other craft on the track and with them it's kill or be killed. Shoot at them as soon as you turn that corner. If you wait too long your laser bolts may miss and then it's head-on collision time. One type of track object you mustn't shoot up is the ammo dump which'll blow up in your face. Instead you'll need it to stock up your ammunition supply.

Dead Ringer is a fast-reflex high-pulsed place to be and there's only one thing wrong with this pseudo-simulation. The instructions tell you how to combat course obstacles but don't show you what each look like. You've got to guess and, at the speed you make around those straights and bends, that's not easy■

RVIVOR



and the fact that you get to wander around spitting acid at things, it's really only a rather tedious exploration.

Survivor is disappointing, despite being professionally programmed, exploiting none of the opportunities its plot offers to the full. Nothing new here■

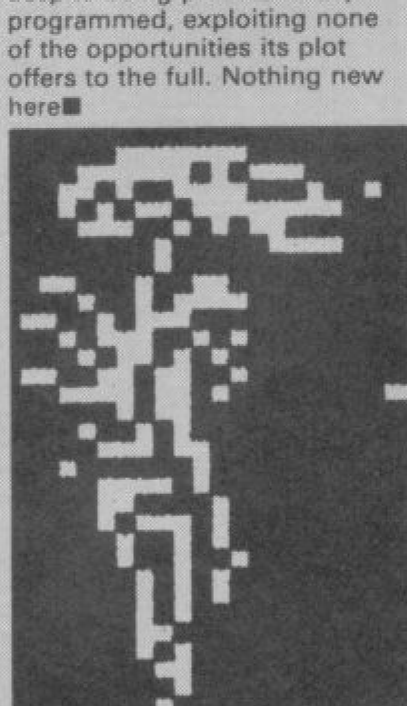
FACTS BOX

Colourful and moderately Alien-like exploratory space game. Lacks longevity and action despite being quite well coded

SURVIVOR
Label: US Gold
Author: Toposoft
Price: £7.99
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K

Reviewer: Jim Douglas

★★★☆☆ 5



TWILIGHT

SLING-SHOT

ARCADE Label: **Power House** Author: **Steve Cargill** Price: **£1.99**. Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Looks pretty with smooth 3D effects but the gameplay must be somewhere else – it's not in this game anyhow

Oh no, it's another of those games from Alpha Ome . . . sorry, Power House. What's this one like? Well, if you really want to know, it's really quite simple. Choose where you want to go on the path selection screen (really a lot of different coloured squares) and then fly there. Then enter attack mode and lots of lovely spaceships zoom forward and backwards in glorious Spec-colour and all you have to do is shoot them. If there's a planet in the area, you can land on it, fly along it like Defender **and when you get to the end, it blows up. Easy innit?**

At first you'll probably be pleasantly surprised by the pretty and quite detailed graphics of the ships but then you will be brought down to earth by the gameplay. It plays like a hedgehog plays frogger■

★☆☆☆☆ 2

STREAKER

ARCADE Label: **Bulldog** Author: **Geoff Calder** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tamara Howard**

An arcade adventure that only got made because somebody thought naked fat people were funny

Look, it doesn't matter why, but the fact is that you're stark naked, in the buff so to speak, and you're in a shopping centre and you've got to get back all your clothes PDQ.

Bulldog has gone mad, and I'm talking mad. Streaker **is an arcade-adventure, involving a quite hideous fat, naked sprite (who for some reason is still wearing his shoes).**

The usual controls are here: ***Pick up, Drop, Examine*** **and so on. The game can be played using the keyboard or a joystick. Not that it matters – gameplay is terribly trundley and not very entertaining■**

★★★☆☆ 5

CONFLICTS 1

STRATEGY Label: **PSS** Author: **in-house** Price: **£12.95** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Gary Rook**

Value for money package – the two good games more than compensate for the dodo

Conflicts 1 is PSS's first wargames compilation tape – three games, Battle of Britain, Falklands 82 **and** Theatre Europe.

All three games included in this pack share the same basic structure. The game is played using a computer map, and the players manoeuvre units, representing divisions or regiments, air squadrons or planes or ships about it. Victory is decided by achieving set conditions – take Port Stanley, defend Germany etc.

When they were sold separately, I would quite happily have forked out hard earned cash for Theatre Europe, **might have bought** Battle of Britain, **and definitely would have given the** Falklands **a miss. At over four quid a game this pack is an OKish deal■**

★★★★☆ 7

CONFLICTS 2

STRATEGY Label: **PSS** Author: **in-house** Price: **£9.95** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Gary Rook**

Worth it for Midway, an excellent strategy game with a real feel to it. Iwo Jima is much less impressive

This time around, you get Battle for Midway **and** Iwo Jima **on one cassette. Both battles are set in the Pacific during WWII.**

Battle for Midway **is great but** Iwo Jima **isn't.**

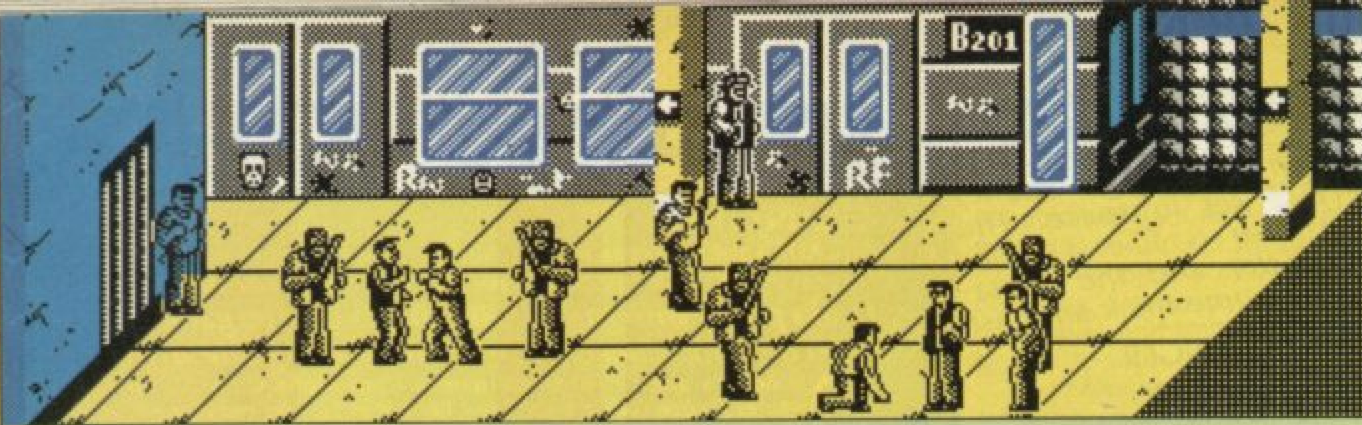
In the first you control the American fleet. You know there's a Japanese task force, full of aircraft carriers, steaming towards Midway Island, where you have an air base. But you don't know where it is you have to find the enemy, and then bring your own ships – including your aircraft carriers – within range and give 'em hell. It's an excellent game.

I wish I could say the same about Iwo Jima, **but I can't. You control the US marines storming ashore on the little island of** Iwo Jima **towards thousands of fanatical Japanese soldiers hidden in almost impregnable fortification. After the initial landings, you find yourself pinned down turn after turn... After a while, it's a pain in the rear achelons.**

Conflicts 2 **is one really good game and one that's a bit of a snooze■**

★★★☆☆ 6

ZONE



RENEGADE



This is going to sell zillions. **Renegade** – converted from the coin-op of the same name – is quite possibly the most visually violent computer game I've ever seen.

It has some of the characteristics of a martial arts game. Combinations of joystick movement and *Fire* button provide a number of attacking and defensive moves which can be used on an ever more cunning and dangerous series of opponents. The big difference is that where **International Karate**, say, allowed for a number of elegant and subtle throws and holds, **Renegade** is street violence at its dirtiest. This includes kicking people when they are down and booting them where it hurts.

Renegade is in various levels, all of which look like the subways, dingy rundown ghetto streets and derelict buildings on the fringes of some American city. Even on Level 1 – set in a tube station – things look bad. Just you, against half a dozen or more opponents. Some of them have what appear to be coshes, others just put the boot in.

Your joystick control provides such wonderful moves as flying leaps, kneeing in the groin, nutting and punching. The animation is excellent – comically realistic.

There's a new feature to the combat game, too – the members of the gang act together – one may grab you and hold you whilst another repeatedly punches your stomach. Alternatively, you may be slugging it out with one jeaned bully-boy only to find your battle cut short by a swipe around the head with a baseball bat from another.



Even if you manage to clear some of villains (difficult because they don't all stay down – some seem to need several knees where it hurts at least) this is only a minor victory. Your real opponent is the Boss who, after a certain point decides to join in the fray. The Boss is the toughest of the lot – his strength level is indicated by a bar alongside yours and he is very difficult to beat – partly because he is defended/supported by the remaining hoodlums.

Maybe, just maybe, you'll make it through to the next level in which it looks like you've stumbled into a Hells Angels party. Oh dear.

The bikers begin by zooming at you on their bikes – you tend to get run over a lot. There is, however, an almost sure-fire move – kick the Angels off their bikes with a flying leap. After that the whole gang comes for you and it's back to kicking and punching again.

Next up is a tribe of whip-wielding leather-clad women. Yep, that's what I said. Very bizarre it looks too.

Next level is a bunch of razor-wielding thugs and finally an interior scene with more thugs plus their leader with gun!

Graphics are reasonable but it's the animation that really scores. All this wanton violence would look like nothing were it not for the brilliant way the Spectrum's graphical possibilities have been used to best effect to give a realistic impression of some complex moves – you'll believe a sprite can hold its goolies and get nutted.

Criticisms? Not many - memory economies mean that a lot of the sprites are repeated (but then hoodlums all look the same really don't they?)

Generally though, it's superb implementation of the arcade game. It is irredeemably violent but never mind. I won't tell anybody if you don't■

FACTS BOX

Violent, beautifully animated conversion from the street gang wars coin-op. You should buy it

RENEGADE
Label: Ocean
Author: Mike Lamb/ Ronnie Fowles
Price: £7.95
Joystick: various
Memory: 48K/128K

Reviewer: Graham Taylor

★★★★☆ ★★★★☆ 8

ARCADE REVIEW



HINTS AND TIPS

● Make space – try to get at gang members individually, you won't stand much chance caught in a crowd
● Even if you are grabbed all is not lost – you can still boot others in the stomach and it is possible to get away
● The flying kick is the key to defeating the bikes
● Towards the end of each level when the Boss is attacking try to pick off remaining gang members as well otherwise they will rush to his defence
● Make sure you hit people enough – one blow to the groin is not enough
● Try to pick off the armed gang members first as they are much more dangerous

PROGRAMMERS

MIKE LAMB did the programming for **Renegade** and has been working at Ocean for a while. Worked with Ronnie on **Top Gun**, now working on **Combat School** – another coin-op licence.
SOFTOGRAPHY: **Steve Davies' Snooker** (various versions, *CDS*, 1984), **Top Gun** (*Ocean*, 1987), **Arkenoid** (*Ocean*, 1987)
RONNIE FOWLES worked on the graphics. Another Ocean regular. Now working with Mike on **Combat School.**
SOFTOGRAPHY: **Short Circuit** (*Ocean*, 1986), **Top Gun** (*Ocean*, 1987)

PUTTING MEMORY ON THE MAP

Where your machine keeps its Ram and how to the most of it make

Here's an interesting question from Darren Battye of Bradford. He writes: **I own a 128K + 2 and I wrote a little program to draw a simple design and saved the picture as a code file. I should have put Save 'Name" code 16384,6912 but by mistake I used Save "Name" code 16384,9612. I thought I had made a drastic mistake but imagine my surprise when I reloaded the code and the basic program I was using reloaded with it. I tried to run it and it all worked OK. Why is this?**

Ah ha! To understand what has happened you need to know something about the Spectrum memory map. This is arranged as shown in Table I. The bottom of memory is occupied by Rom (read only memory) and this takes the address space lying between 0 and 16383. Immediately above the Rom is the Display file which starts at 16384 and occupies the following 6144 bytes. After the display file comes the attribute area which occupies 7689 bytes. The display file and the attribute are between them contain the information which defines the picture on the screen and it is the area that is saved when you save a picture on tape.

As Darren says in his letter he intended to save the 6912 bytes starting at address 16384. Those of you who are quick with a calculator will notice that 6144 + 768 = 6912.

Thus you can see that when you save this area of memory you're in fact saving the contents of both the display file and the attributes area.

Further study of Table I shows that above the attribute area lies the printer buffer and the Basic program area. Various other data are stored above the program area. Also Table I shows that there is a certain amount of free space.

The size of the free space varies considerably. Obviously if you have a very short Basic program which only uses a very small number of variables then most of the memory will be free.

Alternatively if you have a very big Basic program or you define lots of large areas then the free space will shrink practically to nothing. Here we have the explanation for the phenomenon which Darren has observed.

It's likely that Darren had a short Basic program in memory which didn't have very many variables defined. When he entered his command in error he saved an extra 9612 − 6912 = 2700 bytes of memory.

Presumably that 2700 bytes was enough to save his entire Basic program and his variables and all system variables up to and into an area of memory which was at that time free. When he reloaded his program he reloaded everything including his Basic program and all its variables. Very clever!

TAKING THE BREAK OFF

I've been taken to task by several readers for saying in a previous *Helpline* that it isn't possible to disable the *Break* key in a Basic program. For example John Foster of Sheffield writes: **If all you want to do is stop people breaking into your program then it is possible to make the computer crash when the *Break* key is pressed simply by adding the instruction *Poke* 23659,0 to the start of the program.**

Absolutely correct John but as you go on to point out in your letter if you put this *Poke* into your program then you're unable to use the *Input* command, and you must be very careful not to allow the *Scroll?* message to appear at the lower part of the screen. To my mind it does not qualify as a satisfactory method of disabling the *Break* key, because if you press the *Break* key when the *Poke* is installed the program will crash. This isn't really satisfactory for the average user.

Incidentally the reason the machine crashes is because the *Poke* reduces the number of lines available for the machine to write messages on at the bottom of the screen to zero. Therefore when the machine tries to write a message at the bottom of the screen, for example an *Input* request, it gets in a terrible muddle and crashes. You can have some fun by *Poking* other numbers into 23659. Try 3 or 4 for example.

Another typical letter on this topic came from Robert Moseley of Cardiff. He writes: **It is wrong to say that you cannot disable the *Break* key in basic because you can with *Poke* 23613,82 in your program.**

Agreed, Robert, but as you point out in your letter if you use *Clear, Return, Run* and *Gosub* then the *Poke* is no longer effective and you have to re-enter it. This means that if you simply keep your finger on the *Break* key while the program is running and the program comes across one of the above instructions then a program will break at that point. Hence I do not feel that it is really very satisfactory, either.



The *Poke* works because it changes the *ERRSP* system variable. It is this system variable which controls the address to which the basic Rom jumps to when an error occurs.

As a final contribution on this topic I received a letter from John Carter of Stratford. I am reproducing his letter verbatim here together with two routines that he enclosed because he provides a very simple machine-code routine for disabling the *Break* key. John writes as follows: **Although as you said in the August SU you cannot remove the tests for *Break* in the Rom you can prevent them being acted on. I enclose a routine in assembly language and also in Basic data form which does this. The code produced by either the assembler text or the Basic can be put anywhere in memory and called once using *Usr* address where address is the same as the load address. It will cause *Break* to be ignored while all other errors send the Basic program to Line 9999. If there is no line there then the program will halt and the facility will be switched off. However you could put a line there redirecting the program wherever you wished. You can always escape by doing *Goto* 10000 from within your program. Your main program is unaffected until an error occurs but naturally holding *Break* down causes the program to slow considerably which might in itself be useful. this is not a true *On Error Goto* as supported on some machines but may be useful.**

John's Basic program is listed in Table II and the equivalent assembly language is in Table III. The Basic program *Pokes* the routine into memory at address 60000 which may or may not be convenient. However, as he says in his leter, it could be *Poked* into memory at any point. The basis for John's routine is similar to the *Poke* 23613,82 which Robert Moseley has suggested. John has called the first part of his routine *Setup* and it is this part which puts the address of his main error handling routine into the *ERRSP* system variable.

If you look at Line 40 in Table III you'll see what I mean. The *Usr* address used by the routine is captured first in the *BC* register and transferred to the *HL* register. Fourteen is added to the number to give the address of the *Error* routine listed at Line 50. This number is then put into the address pointed to by the *ERRSP* system variable. The effect of this routine is to force the Basic Rom to jump to the *Error* routines instead of the ordinary Rom *Error* routine when *Break* or any other error occurs in Basic program.

The actual *Error* routine at Line 50 then handles the results of an error occurence. John has provided four different facilities for error occurrence. First of all if the program is finished in the ordinary way then it simply jumps back into the Rom at the appropriate place. Secondly if the *Break* key has been pressed, in which case the *Error Code 20* is generated, the routine jumps back into the Rom beyond the point at which the *Break* is made. Thirdly if a stop in input error occurs then John has included a special piece of code which handles the problems that result before jumping back into the Rom. Finally if none of these things occur then the routine drops through to Line 60 where the *Outx* routine forces a jump to Basic Line 9999, as described by John.

It's a very neat piece of code and is probably of great use. Congratulations John, I hope you enjoy playing with the free copy of **Zynaps** which I am sending to you.

HEWSON HELPLINE

HELPLINE

EXTRA RAM AND WHAT TO DO WITH IT WHEN YOU FIND IT



There is one thing I don't understand about the Spectrum, writes Craig Bowman of Durham. **Why is it stated as being a 48K machine when only 41K is usable? I know the memory goes from 16384 to 65535 but the screen memory cannot be used in programs. Neither can the variable so how can top-class programmers manage to squeeze more memory out?** I suppose the Spectrum is called a 48K machine because Sinclair Research, decided to call it a 48K machine. I suppose they're entitled to call it what they want, provided that they are not deliberately misleading. Don't you agree? To be fair there is 48K of Ram (Random Access Memory) in the machine. Of course, as you say Craig, some of the Ram is used as screen memory and other bits and pieces. But none the less it is there.

There is nothing magical to the way in which top-class programs squeeze more memory out of the machine. They just dig into every spare corner. Have another look at the memory map in Table I. You'll see the printer-buffer starts at address 23296 and goes on to address 23551. This printer buffer is completely redundant unless you use the original Sinclair printer or something like the Alphacom printer, which very few people do these days now that the RS232 is available through the Interface 1, or directly on the 128K + 2. There is therefore a juicy 256 bytes of memory sitting in the printer buffer totally unused.

Similarly the user-defined graphics (UDG) area at the top of memory which occupies 768 bytes when the machine is switched on is often collapsed to nothing by programmers simply by changing the value in the UDG System variable which is held at address 23675. Hence just by using these two areas, the printer buffer and the UDG area you can obtain another 1K of space for your program.

If you're really desperate you can use the display file. Obviously you have to be a bit careful how you go about it but the principle is to set the *Paper* and *Ink* colours to the same value all over part of the screen and then that part of the screen appears blue, black, white or whatever, no matter what data or code is stored in the equivalent part of the display file.

One final trick which is often used in programs released commercially, although it is very dangerous while you are developing the program, is to overwrite all or part of the system variables area which lies between address 23552 and 23733. The majority of system variables area is used to store the numbers which control the way Basic operates. Obviously if you have a program which is completely in Machine Code then most of those system variables are unused. Of course if something goes wrong with your program then you have very little chance of escaping to Basic and regaining control of the machine. However, as always, you cannot do any harm to your machine by playing around by memory in this wav – the worst that can happen is that the machine will crash■

TABLE I The Spectrum Memory Map. The stack pointer, *sp*, is not held in Ram but in the *sp* register in the Z80A microprocessor

Starting Address or System Variable Name	Location of System variable	Memory Contents
16384	–	Display file
22528	–	Attributes
23296	–	Printer buffer
23552	–	System variables
23734	–	Microdrive map
CHANS	23631	Channel information
PROG	23635	Basic program
VARS	23627	Variables
E LINE	23641	Command/line being edited
WORKSP	23649	Data being input
STKBOT	23651	Calculator stack
STKEND	23653	Spare
sp	–	Machine stack and *Gosub* stack
RAMTOP	23730	User machine-code routines
UDG	23675	User-defined graphics
P AMT	23732	End of Ram

TABLE II John Carter's Basic program for Poking *this machine code error routine into memory*

```
10>CLEAR 59999
20 FOR A=60000 TO 60071
30 READ N: POKE A,N: NEXT A
50 STOP
100 DATA 105,96,17,14,0,25,235,42,61,92,115,35,114,201,118,237,123,61
101 DATA 92,33,58,92,126,54,255,254,0,202,3,19,254,255,202,3,19,254
102 DATA 20,202,125,27,254,12,40,13,33,15,39,34,66,92,151,50,68,92
103 DATA 195,118,27,42,93,92,126,254,36,32,235,35,34,93,92,195,125,27
```

TABLE III John Carter's machine-code error routine

```
10 :           ERROR CONTROL              :
   :                                      :
   :           COPYRIGHT 1984             :
   :                                      :
   :           JOHN.C.CARTER              :
   :                                      :
20 : (A)    BREAK IS DISABLED             :
   :                                      :
   : (B)    A JUMP TO A LINE PAST THE     :
   :                                      :
   : END OF THE PROGRAM RESTORES          :
   :                                      :
   : NORMAL OPERATION AND STOPS           :
   :                                      :
   : (C) * ALL OTHER ERRORS CAUSE A       :
   :                                      :
   : JUMP TO LINE 9999 IF LINE EXISTS,
   :                                      :
   : IF NOT THEN SAME AS (B)              :
   :                                      :
30 CHADD:EQU  23645 :LENGTH 72 BYTES :
   LINE :EQU  23618 :                :
   STATE:EQU  23620 :   RELOCATABLE  :
   ERRSP:EQU  23613
   ERRNR:EQU  23610
40 SETUP:LD   L,C :  BC ALWAYS=ADDRESS
         LD   H,B :  IN USR STATEMENT
         LD   DE,14
         ADD  HL,DE :ADD 14 GIVE THE
         EX   DE,HL :ADDRESS OF ERROR
         LD   HL,(ERRSP)
         LD   (HL),E :PUT THAT ADDRESS
         INC  HL :     ON STACK
         LD   (HL),D
         RET
50 ERROR:HALT
         LD   SP,(ERRSP)
         LD   HL,ERRNR
         LD   A,(HL)
         LD   (HL),255
         CP   0 :       IF PROGRAM
         JP   Z,#1303 :FINISHED THEN
         CP   255 :     JP ROM ERROR
         JP   Z,#1303 :HANDLER
         CP   20 : BREAK IN PROGRAM
         JP   Z,#1B7D
         CP   12 : STOP IN INPUT
         JR   Z,INPUT
60 OUTX :LD   HL,9999
         LD   (LINE),HL
         SUB  A
         LD   (STATE),A
         JP   #1B76
   INPUT:LD   HL,(CHADD)
         LD   A,(HL)
         CP   "$"
         JR   NZ,OUTX :ORDINARY INPUT
         INC  HL
         LD   (CHADD),HL :INPUT LINE
         JP   #1B7D
```



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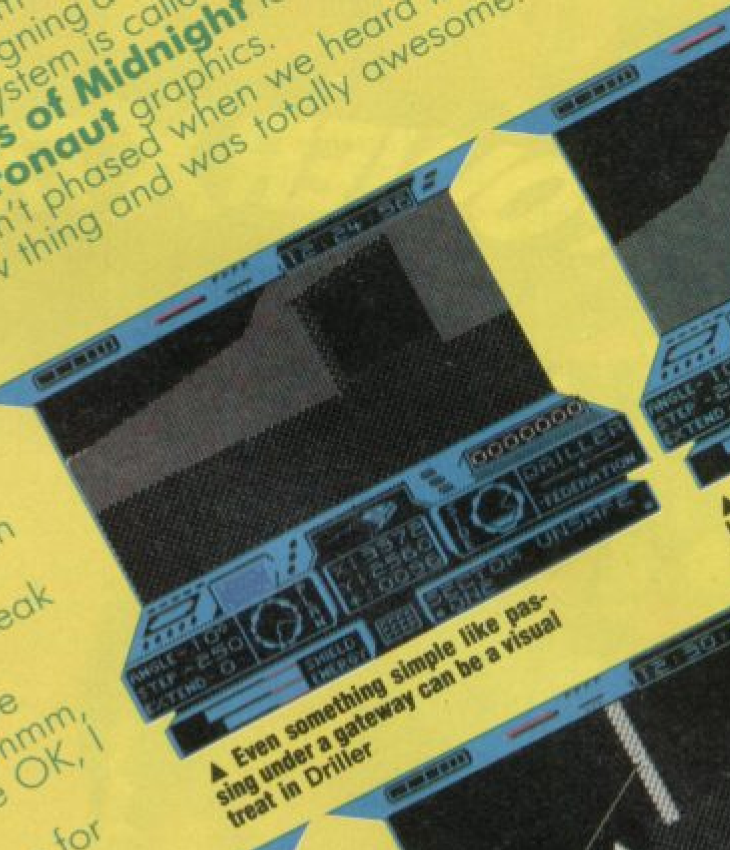
DRILLER

Driller by all accounts – stands a good chance of being quite special.

It's the reason you haven't heard from Incentive for quite a while – its programmers have been hard at work designing a fascinating step forward in real-time solid 3D game graphics. The system is called Freescape and it's better than both Mike Singleton's **Lords of Midnight** landscaping, and more detailed than Pete Cooke's **Micronaut** graphics.

Being cynics here on SU we weren't phased when we heard that Freescape was a 'revolutionary' new thing and was totally awesome. "Bah! Humbug!" we said, knowing full well that the last game concept to be described as revolutionary was **The Great Space Race** which was a revolution only in badness.

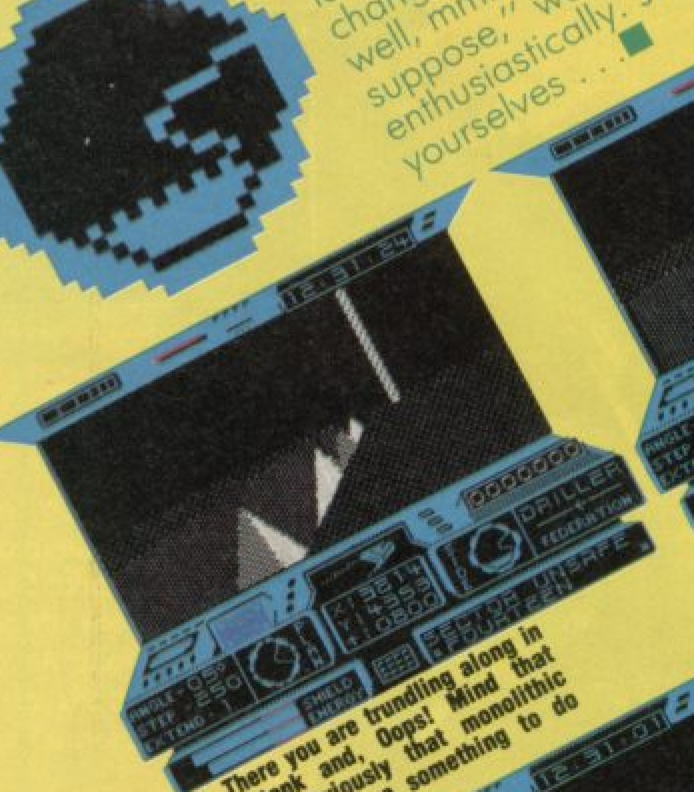
However on seeing a sneak preview of **Driller's** landscaping in action we changed our tune. "Hmmm, well, mmmm might be OK, I suppose," we said enthusiastically. Judge for yourselves . . . ■



▲ Even something simple like passing under a gateway can be a visual treat in Driller



▲ The shading makes the gateway look real – all the more so as you move nearer



▲ There you are trundling along in your tank and, Oops! Mind that ravine! Obviously that monolithic thing must have something to do with it

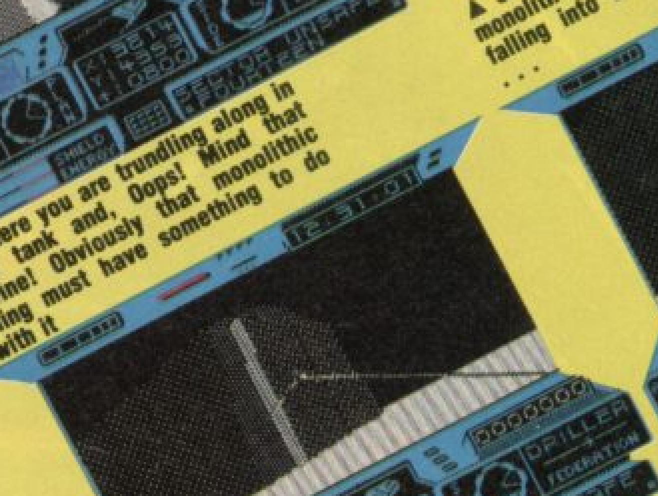


▲ Sneaking up a bit nearer to the monolith we are in serious danger of falling into the ravine how about . . .

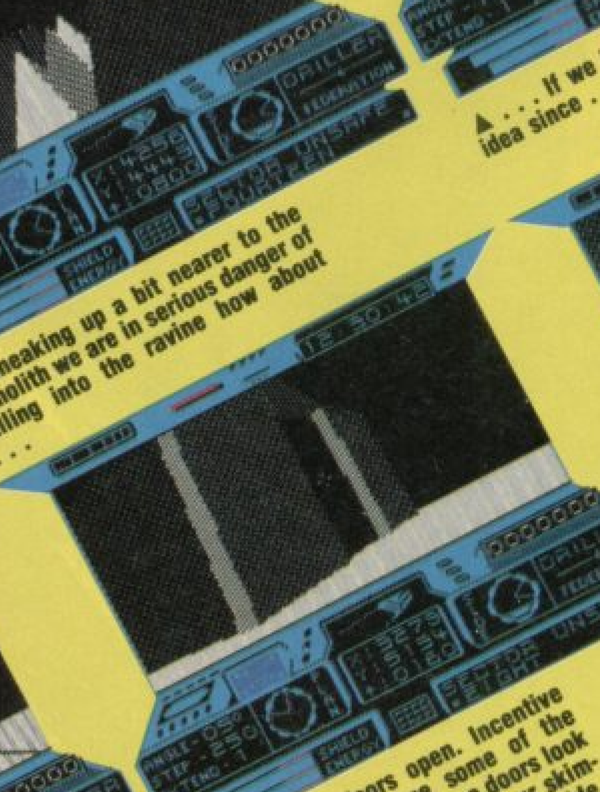


▲ . . . If we blast it? What a good idea since . . .





▲ A simple Freescaping problem. Obviously any sane person coming across hangars is going to consider the possibility they contain something interesting . . . Getting at it means, blasting the doors . . .



▲ . . . The doors open. Incentive says it may change some of the shading effects but those doors look pretty solid to us. Swing your skimmer around and take a look inside



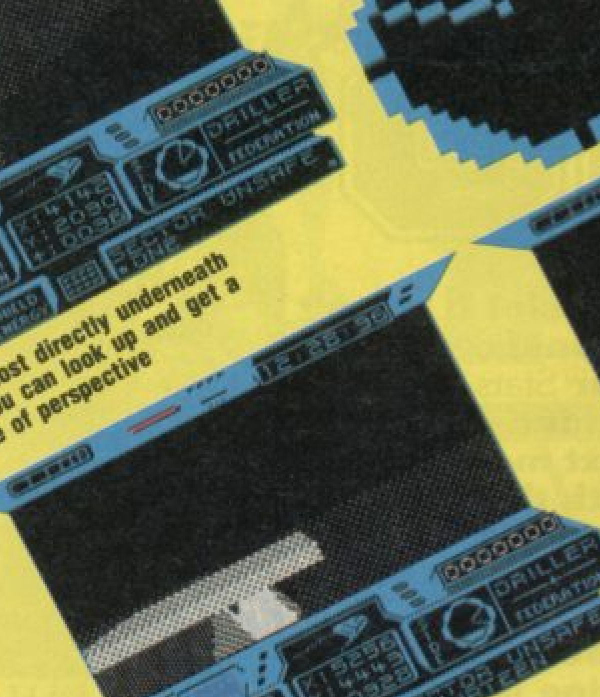
▲ Inside hangar. In front of us is th tank thingy we were just travelli in, which, now seated in our airp ne, we can see before us



▲ Even almost directly underneath the gate you can look up and get a true sense of perspective



▲ . . . It falls over neatly providing us with a bridge



▲ Close up to the bridge showing, at this range, the 3D perspective on its surface



▲ Turning around to cross the bridge . . .



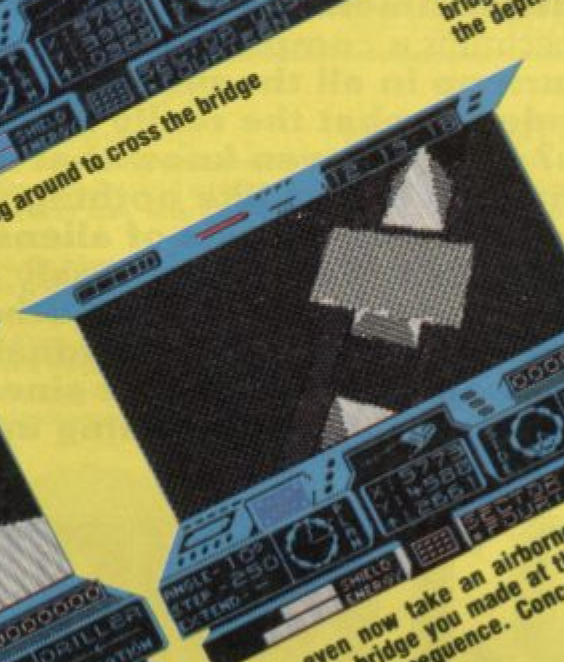
▲ . . . You're now standing on the bridge and looking over the side to the depths below



▲ We can now either fly over it or even try to squeeze underneath it



▲ Now airborne you can look back at the hangars from a completely new perspective – see how the *XYZ* co-ordinates change dramatically – and . . .



▲ . . . even now take an airborne look at that bridge you made at the end of the first sequence. Conceptual continuity huh?

Freescape landscaping

The idea is this. Freescape is a programming system that allows Incentive to create 3D landscapes which may be viewed from any angle and with authentic perspective – updating as you move around under joystick control. Described simply, it is the approximate 3D solid geometry equivalent of the landscaping techniques used in Mike Singleton's Lords of Midnight. Though *Freescape* can't manage the detail the *Midnight* system did, the 3D presentation is spectacular and, given the horrendous calculations involved, incredibly fast.

Driller — the game plot

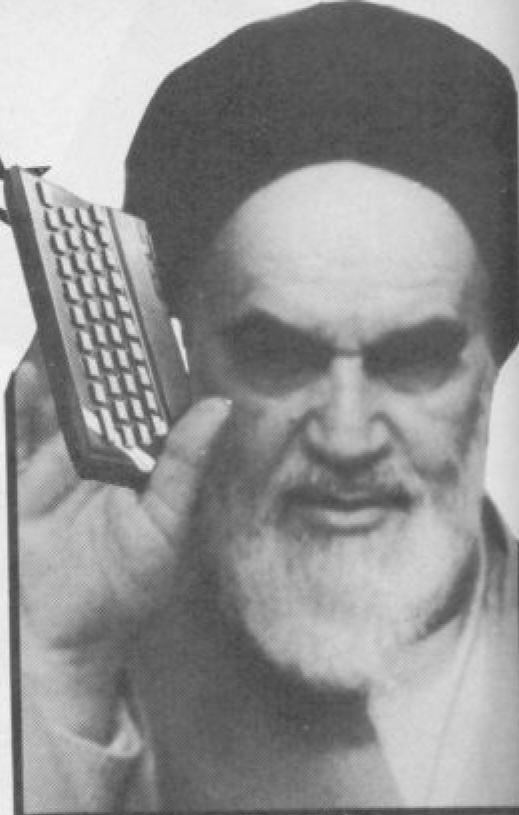
Driller is set on a moon called Mitral. Mitral is one of those many heavenly bodies which feature in computer games which are just riddled with extremely vicious defensive systems. Quite obviously you have to go there, the reason being the planet is about to blow itself into little bits.

The problem is gas is building up underneath the moon's surface and to save the world you've got to release it via a series of carefully positioned drilling rigs. The more effectively positioned the rig the more gas it will release and the more points you get. Partly this is trial and error and partly it means picking up on visual clues you find in the landscape. And at the same time you've got to fight off a whole deadly defensive mechanisms.

Mostly you are ground based – zooming around in a sort of tank/skimmer affair but if you get lucky you may find an aeroplane which is hidden somewhere on Mitral. Get to it and the game becomes a kind of amazing solid-object 3D flight simulation as you fly over the surface looking at its features from above

MEGA PREVIEW

STARS AND THEIR SPECTRUMS



New York! Paris! London! Monte Carlo! Oslo! It wasn't necessary to visit any of these international centres of entertainment for SU to hack together Stars and Their Spectrums **a completely original feature idea which will probably turn up in all the other magazines next month.**

Ever wondered what the really famous do with their Spectrums? Did you even know that many of today's international celebrities like nothing more than to plug in, tune in and wipe out (hoards of aliens). We at SU – *The Magazine the Stars Read* – fearlessly probed the people who matter and asked the question no other magazine would dare to ask, namely: "Tell me interntaional celeb how do you feel about your Spectrum?" However since nobody would answer us we had to make the whole thing up . . .

AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI

Often portrayed in the West as a dodgy religious fanatic, the Ayatollah is actually just as harmless old bearded chap with a Spectrum. The Ayatolla is particularly fond of Sir Clive's Spectrum perhaps because it is clad mainly in black, and is therefore following the strict regime dictated by Islam. The colour flash bothers him a bit, but he's not quite sure why.

The Ayatollah uses his Spectrum, mainly to calculate the location of Mecca. Sometimes he just sits and talks to it, waiting to hear Allah's divine words. Since the Spectrum's vocal capacity is not large, from time to time, it misinterprets the good Lord's words something rotten.

● The Ayatollah says*, "There is only one God, and Allah is his name. Who is this Clive geezer?"



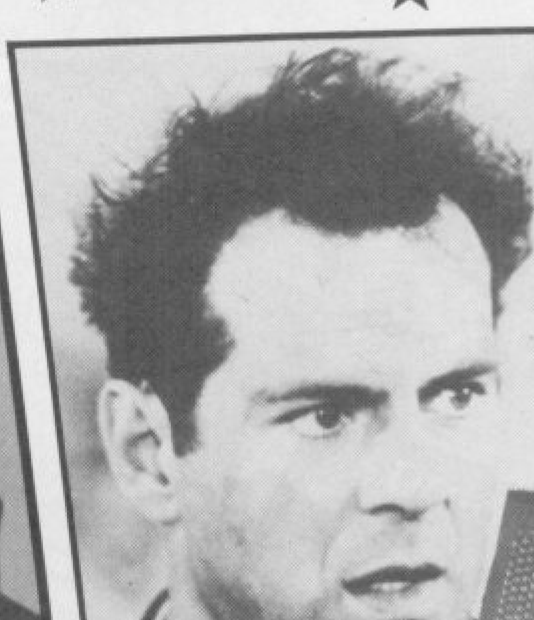
MADONNA

Madonna is, of course, an internationally famous star, but how many people realise the Spectrum plays a big part in her success.

Although her 128K+ is not capable of mastering the complexities of the two bar riffs that prevail in Madonna's music, thus making it unsuitable as a rhythm guitarist, it has a wonderfully bland beep, making it the ideal choice for a backing vocalist and Syndrum impersonator.

The Spectrum is also useful for carrying her luggage, holding her make-up and acting as a bodyguard on long foreign tours.

● Madonna says*, "Uh, y'know, without my Spectrum, I probably would still be where I am today, but it certainly gives me something to play with whenever Sean's in prison."



BRUCE WILLIS

The star of TV's *Moonlighting* and nearly everything else finds his Spectrum a great aid to relaxation. When he's not out drinking in bars and generally being a bit of a lad, Brucie finds that by going home and gets horizontal with his Spectrum on the coffee table. He mainly plays fast action games, and is particularly pleased to see that *Evil Dead 19* is due soon on repulsive Realism Games.

● Bruce and Maddie say*, "Hey, don't get me wrong" "Don't get you wrong?" "Don't get me wrong" "But when you're as cool as I am you know, you can't afford to get people wrong. You know?" "I know" "You know?"

LESLIE CROWTHER

Poor old Leslie isn't a big fan of the Spectrum, and it's all got to do with *The Price is Right!*

Whilst filming an episode of *The Price is Right* recently, Leslie posed the question', "How much do you think the 128K+3 will cost?" and answers ranged around the £199 figure, as the producers of the programme were sure this was right answer.

Unfortunately, Amstrad spies were at the filming, and Leslie is at this moment being made to watch all 500 editions of the programme continuously in secret Amstrad torture chambers. Apparently too many people believed the £199 price mark, and Amstrad has taken a lot of stick for "putting up the price" which they had never even decided upon.

● All Leslie would say* was, "Arrrgghh no, no, I can't stand it, no more, Showcase Showdown, arrrghh"

***This quote is completely made up**

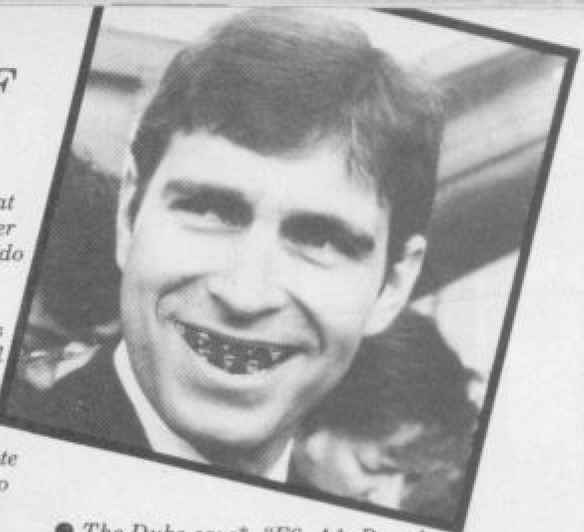
MEL AND KIM



The lovable cockney street girls weren't sure if they'd ever heard of Sir Clive, his Sinclair, or, for that matter, Amstrad. "Sinclair? Fink it's a night club innit?" said one of the puzzled pair*. Therefore, the fact that they each own a Spectrum is remarkable, and is a clear indication that if you give anyone a lot of money, chances are they'll go out and buy something they don't actually need simply because everyone else has got one.

● Mel and Kim say*, "Oh yeah, straight up, stone the crows, no messing, it's a winner an' no mistake, er, what was the question?"

THE DUKE OF YORK



The Duke of York in a keen computer buff. We all know that Andrew is a heroic sailor, helicopter pilot and dancer, but what does he do during his days off, when he just wants to relax?

Only one answer. He turns to his Spectrum. No huntin', shootin' and fishin' for this ex-eligible bachelor because there's nothing that Andy likes better than to load up his battleships program (which he wrote himself) after a hard chukka or two with Charles. Curiously, in Andy's version of the game the Spectrum never wins (this would be a breach of Royal protocol).

● The Duke says, "F6, A1, Bang! F6, A2, Bang! F6, A3, Bang! F6, A4, Bang, Kaboom! That's it I win again"*

DIEGO MARADONNA



Of all the people that we talked to, Maradonna was the least co-operative. He claimed not to actually own a Spectrum, but nevertheless insisted he was good at all shoot-em-ups. A computer game is only of use to Maradonna if it comes with an infinite lives cheat poke. When asked to explain his score of 9,999,999 million on Gauntlet Maradonna explained "It was the hands of Maradonna only, although maybe with a little help from the machine code of God."

BEASTIE BOYS

The Beastie Boys, though renowned as international hell-raisers, are actually good middle class, American lads, with loaded parents.

The Beastie Mums and Dads were always worried about their boys' education and consequently bought their offsprings a Spectrum each.

From such humble beginnings, the boize progressed quickly to become the one-minute-wonder they are today. More than a little credit for their success is due to the Spectrum. Not only did the boize learn all about music from the Speccy, but the computer plays a very large part in the guys' live act. It can be programmed to produce tedious rhythmic beeps that the boize like to much, and is small enough to carry in hand luggage.

● The Beasties say, "Bleugh! (Actually, we didn't mean to break anything at all, and we're very sorry, if you just call our Dads we're sure they'll pay for the damage)"



SAMANTHA FOX

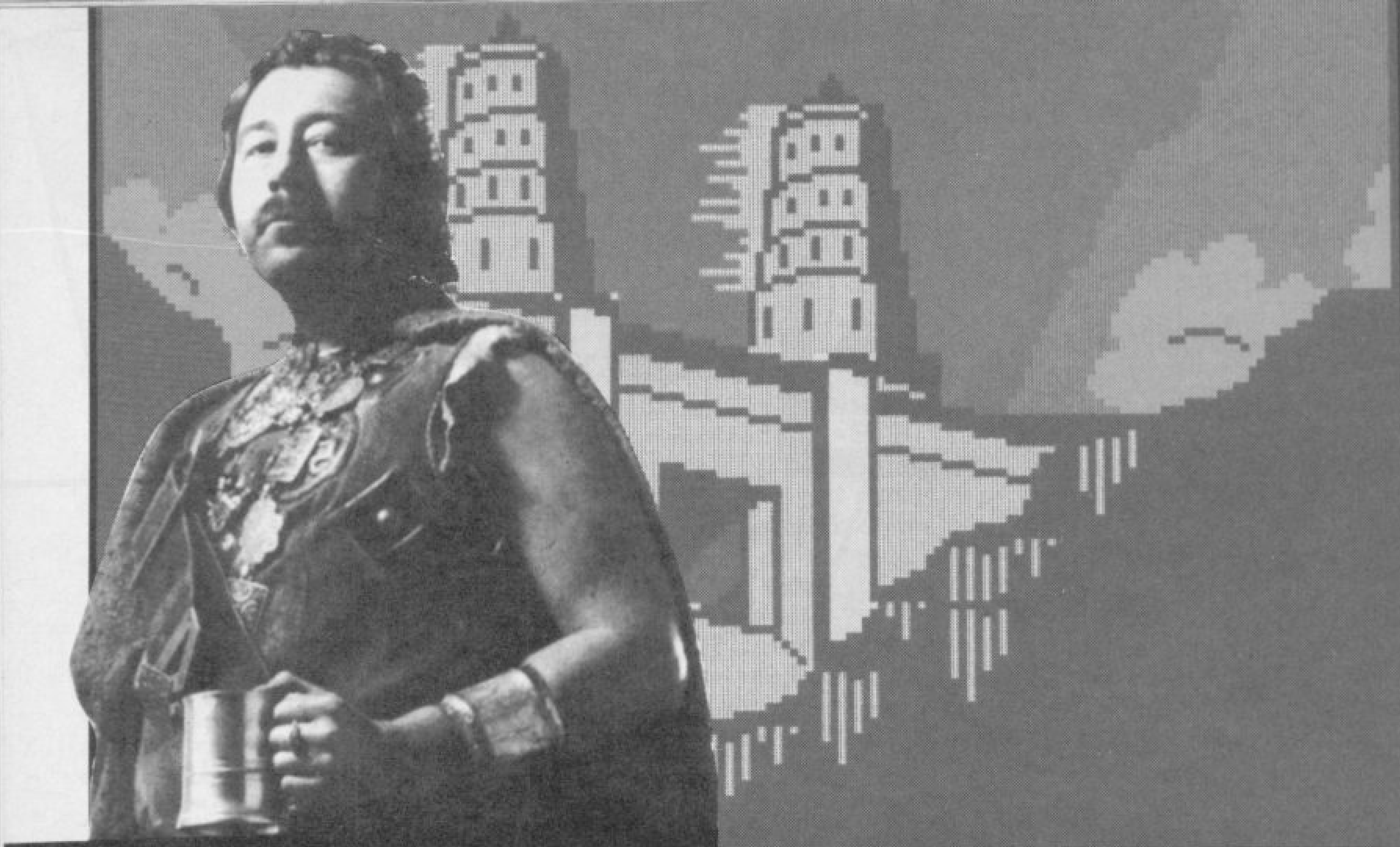


Not many people know or believe this, but Sammy owes her entire career to her 48's. Yes! Sammy has two Spectrums filling the occasional table in her luxury pad.

Long before she was famous, Sammy's mum and dad bought her a Spectrum in the hope that it would help her education. At Sammy's first attempt to load an unknown program called **Strip Poker,** she inadvertently forgot to plug in the computer, lost the game, and was forced to remove all her clothes. Thankfully, a *Sun* reporter was on hand, snapped sexy Sam, and the resulting pictures made her fortune.

● Sammy says*, "Cheers, Sir Clivey, it wouldn't 'ave bin possible wivout you"





GORDO'S HELPLINE

I keep getting these letters asking me what my Thingy's for. I'd have thought it was fairly obvious myself but, for instance, M. Rodrigues of Bexley asks: "Please could you explain the numbers in the Bugsy tips section of your recent issue and also the numbers in the other tips. Make it snappy please."

Just this once, I will. The numbers in the tips refer to the same numbers in the Thingy box at the end of these splendid articles. Look up the number in the Thingy and, lo and behold, you'll find a word next to it. Strung together, these words form the actual verbal clue for your problem and are concealed in this cunning cipher so that those folks who don't yet want to know a particular answer can avoid reading it by accident.

Test it out. If I write 'Gordo is 4,10,1' a quick check of my Thingy will reveal that I am immense (4) but (10) wonderful (1). Dead easy really and, in this case, perfectly correct. Slasher Kelly and I spent long hectic minutes on the phone devising this system – we were going to use a complex program code but neither of us has the faintest inkling about programming and gave it up as a bad job■

Edward Power of Co Cork has been stuck in the bog for a while in

Shadows of Mordor

"I've reached the dead marshes and have recruited Smeagol. I've managed to make a raft out of some logs and the rope but I can't go any further." A similar but more explicit plea comes from Anthony Sanders of Prestwood who explains, "I can't get the raft to move and the logs are too heavy to lift. Without the raft I'm not able to cross the quicksand."

Right, a run-down I have on this from my old mate Thorne the Slayer of Mansfield – to whom eternal blessings.

Says Thorne, "Your reviewer was wrong when he talked about the game being difficult – I found it very straightforward. I think adventures reviewers sometimes don't have enough time to get really involved but I agree that a book should have been included as some knowledge of '**The Two Towers**' is required.

"And, on the marshes: Here you'll find four logs if you travel around. Drag them one by one to the northern edge of the swamp and drop them. Now go to the foot of the cliff and wait for Smeagol. When he enters kill him with the sword – this will just knock him to the ground. Then tie the rope to Smeagol. He'll ask you to take it off. Tell him 'No' and he will plead with you.

"Tell Smeagol 'Promise' and he'll promise to be good. Pull the rope to release him and he'll give you directions. Go to the northern edge of the swamp and make a raft. Then climb on to it and leave Smeagol behind. Pole the raft (presumably this is with the branch you cut earlier to make a lever – *GG*) and you'll reach the southern edge of the swamp.

"Tell Sam to climb off the raft, pole it again and you'll be back at the northern edge. Tell Smeagol to climb on to the raft and pole again. Now climb off and pull the rope. Smeagol will direct you E and SE. If a Black Rider is present Smeagol will tell you not to move – so wait. Smeagol is essential to get past this stage."

If this isn't help enough, turn to pages 80-81, this SU, for a complete map of **Shadows of Mordor**.

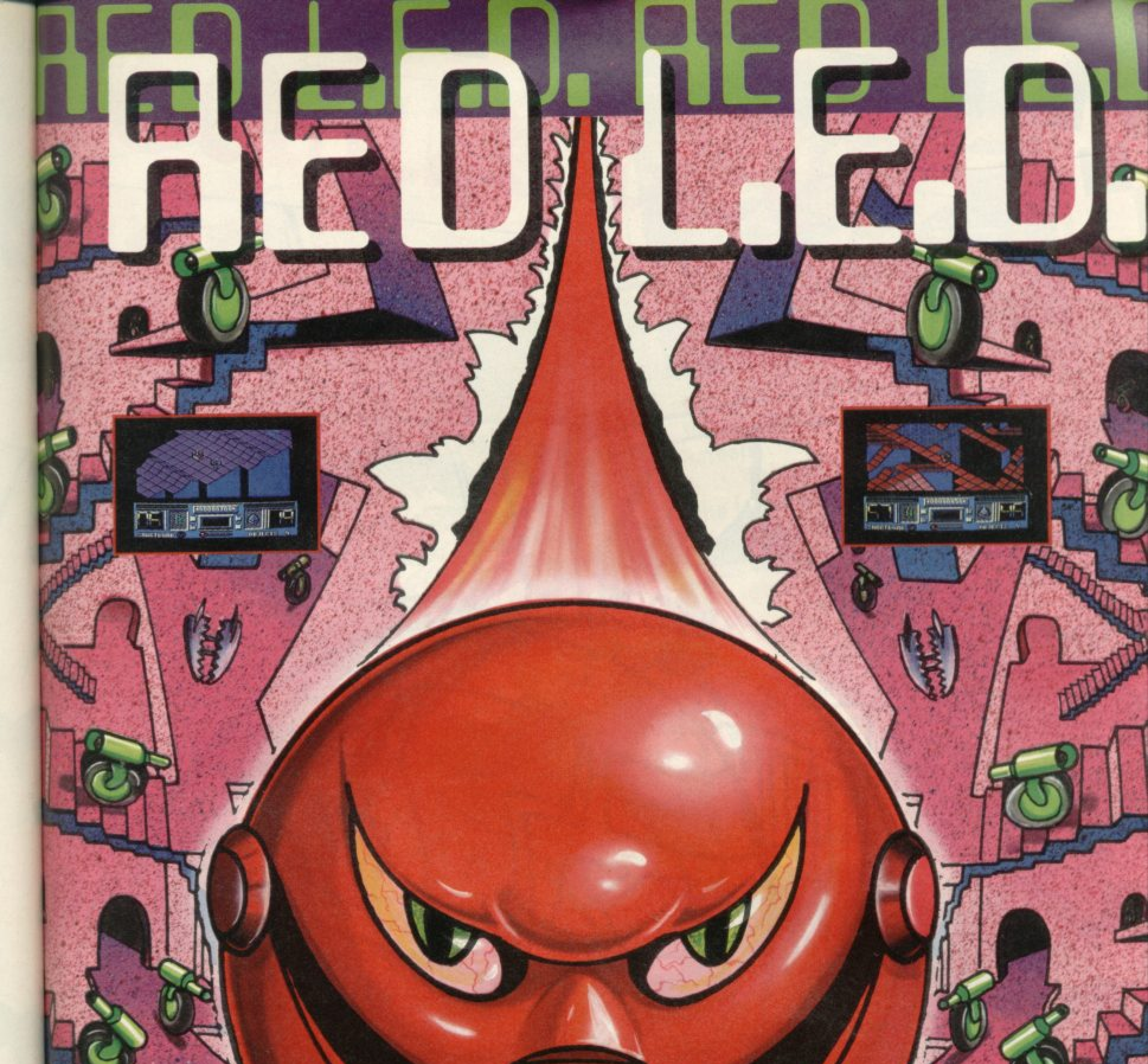
Sticking with Middle Earth for a while, let's take another look at the resurrected wanderings of Bilbo in

The Hobbit

as there seems to be a new generation of adventurers stuck in all the old spots. Tracey Guynne of Stevenage is, for instance, "getting killed by the Elven King's butler and I can't get out of the Goblin's Dungeon because when I try to get out of the window it says I can't reach it." Marc Gilbert of Beit Hakerem, Jerusalem has "been stuck for months at the Spiders' Webs. The only time I got through I fell in the marshes." To relieve all these miseries here's a run down on half a dozen or so of the most usual Hobbit probs:

The Trolls' Clearing: To avoid being casseroled and eaten by these unappreciative anthropophages, go immediately N to the trolls' path and wait a few times until 'Day Dawns'. Then you can go S to the clearing, inspect the now petrified cannibals and collect the large key.

The Goblin's Dungeon: Say to whoever happens to be with you "Open window". Then say to him "Carry me" followed by "Go through window". If your companion refuses just try again but, if you're met with a complete refusal, try feeding him as he's probably weak and needs a Mars or something similar.


RED L.E.D.



YOUR BEDROOM...
IT'S
SUPER SPRINT
BEST·TYRE



GORDO'S HELPLINE

Crossing the Forest River: To find the boat, look across river – you'll see it and can now throw the rope across the river until it lands in the boat. Pull the rope when it does thus bringing it to you. Climb into the boat and enter 'climb out' to disembark.

The Spider's Webs: Break the web – with your hand, not the sword. This will create new exits, so head NE and break the web again. Don't go E or you'll die in the bog – there seem to be a lot of these in Middle Earth – and head N to the Elvish clearing.

The Elven King's Cellar: The easiest way to get out of here is when you possess the ring. Wear it – thus becoming invisible of course – and wait for the butler to enter. He'll empty a barrel and leave the lid off. Get into it and wait for the butler to push it into the river. You can then float gently out to Lake Town and your encounter with Smaug. If you don't have the ring, try killing the butler with assistance from your mates.

Pale Bulbous Eyes: After getting the treasure go S three times, D and then S twice again. At this point you're in serious danger from the aforesaid pbe. Avoid certain death by heading W on the path, waiting twice. Repeat this again and then head W to safety. There you go, that's **The Hobbit** for another coupla years until it's re-released again.

Here's the second part of the complete solution to

The Pawn

provided by Darren Millin, Newtownards. Last time we'd just picked up the hat and worn it... "Take the cushion, then the coin and drop the cushion. Drop the rake and hoe and then E, NE, NW. Now push the button. Wait four times and pull the door. Enter the lift, push the door and take the rope. Push the second button, pull the door and go S. Remove the lumps with the trowel and then drop it.

"N, push the door, the first button and then pull the door. S, SE, U, U, open the door and go W, D, E, E, E, E, N, E, E. Take and wear the armour. Look in the fountain and take the chit, W, W, W, N. Buy the following using the coin and the chit; whisky bottle, beer bottle and ration. NW, NW, climb rocks, U, U, S, W. Melt the snowman with white, take white then NE, W. Split the white with the prism then remix the colours. Take and wear the boots then E, S, E, N, D, D, E, E, E, D, N, N. Give the rations and then the lumps to the alchemists. NE and take the aerosol and cast the spell on the tomes – use those words. Now you can read the tomes. SW, NW, W, N, N, N, NE, N. Open the cupboard and tie the rope to the hook. Then take the rope and tear the paper wall with your boots and climb the rope. Now drop the rope and S. Knock on the door five times. Give the whisky bottle to the porter and W. Take and climb the rope, drop the white, climb the rope again then drop it and go S, E, D and N." More to follow in the third and hopefully final instalment, next **SU**

Demon from the darkside

forwarded, again, by Thorne the Slayer:

"In the cave you should examine the statue, read the message. Say MECLA and head E. Examine the wall and take the mask in the shiny cave and, in the dark pit, wait until the walls close in and then use the plank. Climb plank to escape. Before the walls do close in make sure you examine the puddle, take the rat and cast life.

When you reach the statue you must insert the ruby to pass. The route in the very long tunnel is S, D, break the steps, In, take the torch, rope and bone. Now go out, wear the mask and go E. Light the torch, take the teleport and W. Throw the rope to climb back up. You'll need the lit torch to pass the spirit so ensure you light it at the



GORDO'S HELPLINE

time I've mentioned. Finally, to get past the dragon all you have to do is kill it.."

Last month I promised you a solution to

Spy Trek

as completed by Ryan Redman of Blaenafon, Gwent. Here's Part One, the rest to follow next month.

"First lift the lid and draw the curtains. Examine inside the pocket and get the wallet. Now get the pill and swallow it. You'll wake up in an old storeroom. Open the briefcase, get the beard and wear it. Now remove the grating and enter the hole. You're now in an air duct. Go W, press the button and go E twice. Sit on the belt which will transport you to the airport terminal. Give money to the tramp – repeat this until he gives you something. Get the key and then the umbrella. Go E and, in the bar, speak to the barman. Enter 'Unyon' and get the crisps he produces for you. Open the packet and get the onion inside. Take the passport and go W, then N twice. Show the passport and go N.

You have reached Runway 1, so enter the plane. Go W, open the drawer and get the knife. E twice and peel the onion – this helps the pilot to fly the plane. Go W and leave the plane and you find yourself in Paris. After heading N and W enter the taxi and say 'Tower'. On arriving at the Eiffel Tower open the gate. Now go up and enter the balloon – repeat this instruction until you float away and not down. You will now float off to Switzerland..." The other half next time chaps – that's all for now.

Now turn over for the full, complete, un-censored map of Melbourne's last adventure.

GREATBELLY'S THINGY

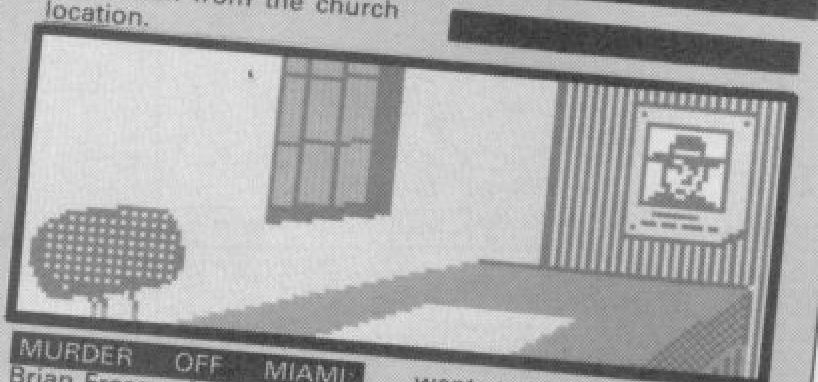
1: WONDERFUL 2: BLANKET 3: BOX 4: IMMENSE 5: SCISSORS 6: INSERT 7: FOOD 8: SHOUT 9: OPEN 10: BUT 11: THROW 12: CARD 13: WITH 14: EAT 15: FREEZE

THE QUICKIES

EMERALD ISLE: From Athens Nick Langlanitis asks "How to open the two doors in the wooden city and how can I travel further than two stations on the railway?" Most doors in the game will open at request but the Complex Doors below the Monument – the ones I'm assuming you mean – are different. For these you'll need the identity card. Get it from the beggar by giving him some food from the grocer's shop. 6,12 into the slot beside the doors in the complex. The forest station has two platforms, one for travel to near the native village and the other, south, platform for trips to the seaside station. That's all as far as I know.

REBEL PLANET: Another Athenian, Tolis Karastratis, wants to know how to pass the security robot on the second planet. "I know I need a blanket but if it's in the hotel bedroom how do I get in the room without having to smash it down. Also what do I do with the Phonic fork?" The rotund hotelier at the Zoddi has a room key – try getting it from him! 11,2 over the security 'bot to fox it. The Phonic Fork is a sensor and you must tap objects with it – try the Crystal for some useful results.

URBAN UPSTART: Laurence Creighton of RSA can't cross the muddy building site. There's a pair of boots in a box in the ratty cellar of the deserted house – 9,3,13,5 to get them. After crossing the mud you'll discover a flying suit hidden in the pipes stacked there. To enter the deserted house you have to 14,7 which you can obtain from the church location.



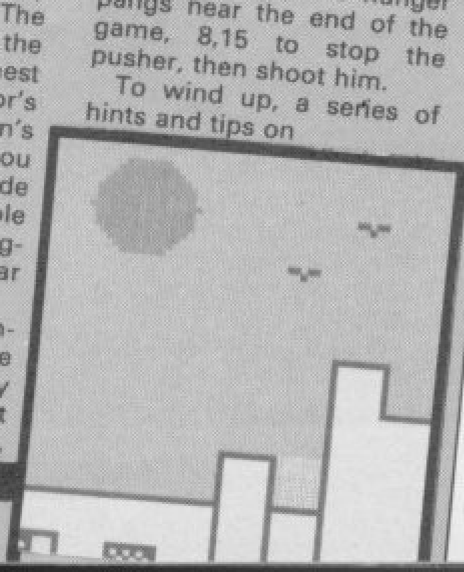
MURDER OFF MIAMI: Brian Fraser of Fife and Phil Ayres, Kent can't get started. Moans Fraser, "I can't get out of the office at the start and I've typed everything I can think of." Have either of you tried 'Get up' at the beginning? This is apparently the way to start but from what I've heard it's probably better to lie down and die without even bothering. Let's be having some info all you others.

KENTILLA: J Cole of Barnsley dies after collecting the Iron Rod in the Troll's lair. "What's the cure to the unknown illness and where's Velnor's staff? This sickness is the Black Death, contracted in the unhygienic conditions of the Troll's quarters. You must cast the Cure Disease Spell to be cured but will also need dry moss for the casting. The spell is learnt by reading the Red Scroll in the Iron Chest in Tylon's castle. Velnor's staff is also there, in Tylon's bedroom. By the way, if you wear the gold ring you made in the crucible you'll be able to spot the Ward of Disintegration on the balcony near the Troll's lair.

HAMPSTEAD: Tracy Guynne can't even get out of the house at the start and is only able to turn the TV off, whilst Andrew Hill, Isle of Wight, wants to know where to find the key to the bike shed in the garden. Ignore the TV and examine the room. Pick up the UB40. Go U and E and search around upstairs a bit. When you're clothed, come down again, go E and examine this room – get the key, it's the shed key. How's that for starters? OK?

MATT LUCAS: Allan Phillips, Camden Town, has tyre and petrol but can't mend or open the car. He'd also like to know how to stop the addict and what is the purpose of the sawdust, banana, shoes and chocolate. Ignore the broken-down car and find another to put petrol in. As far as I know the other objects are all red herrings or useless except for the chocolate bar. This can be eaten to relieve hunger pangs near the end of the game, 8,15 to stop the pusher, then shoot him.

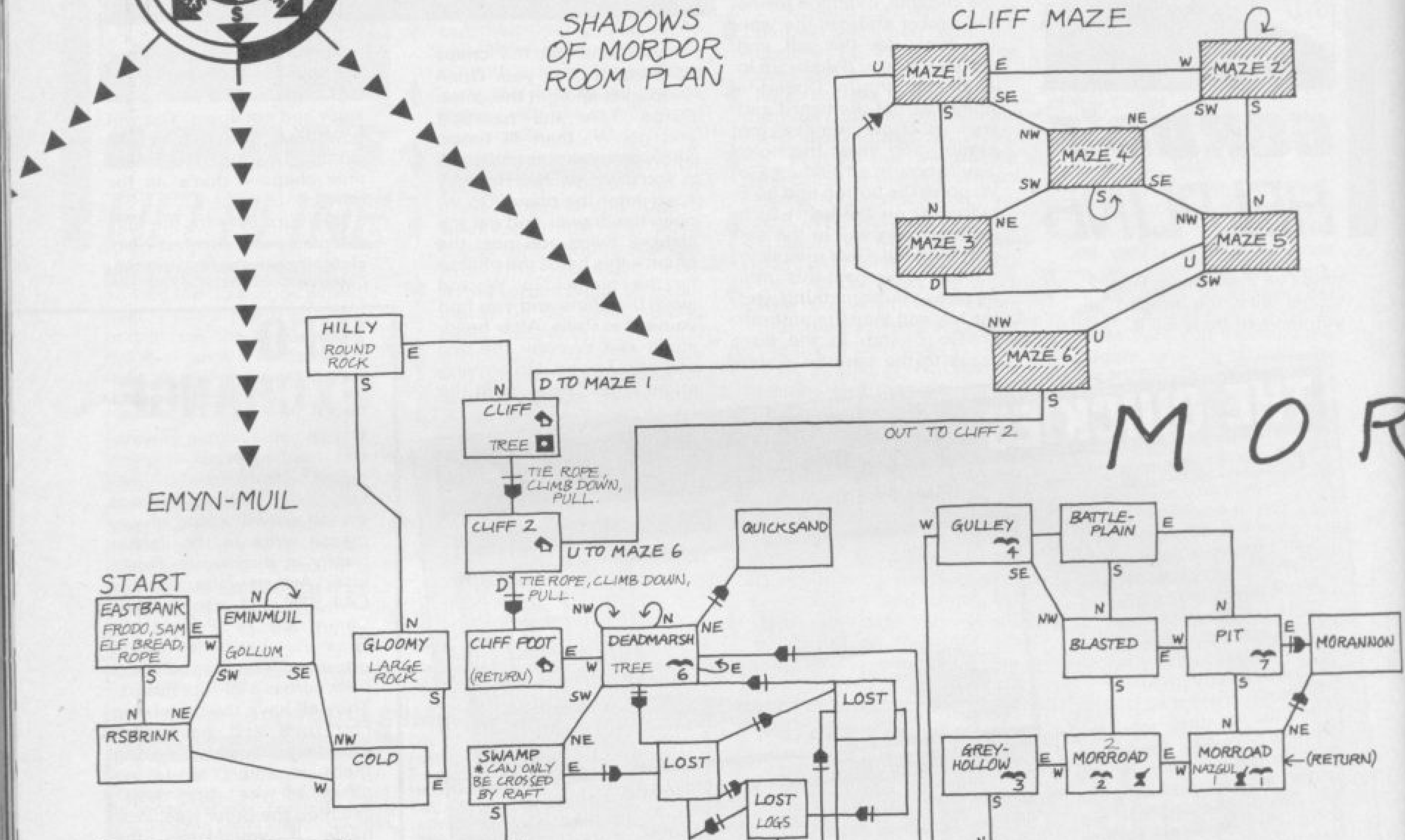
To wind up, a series of hints and tips on

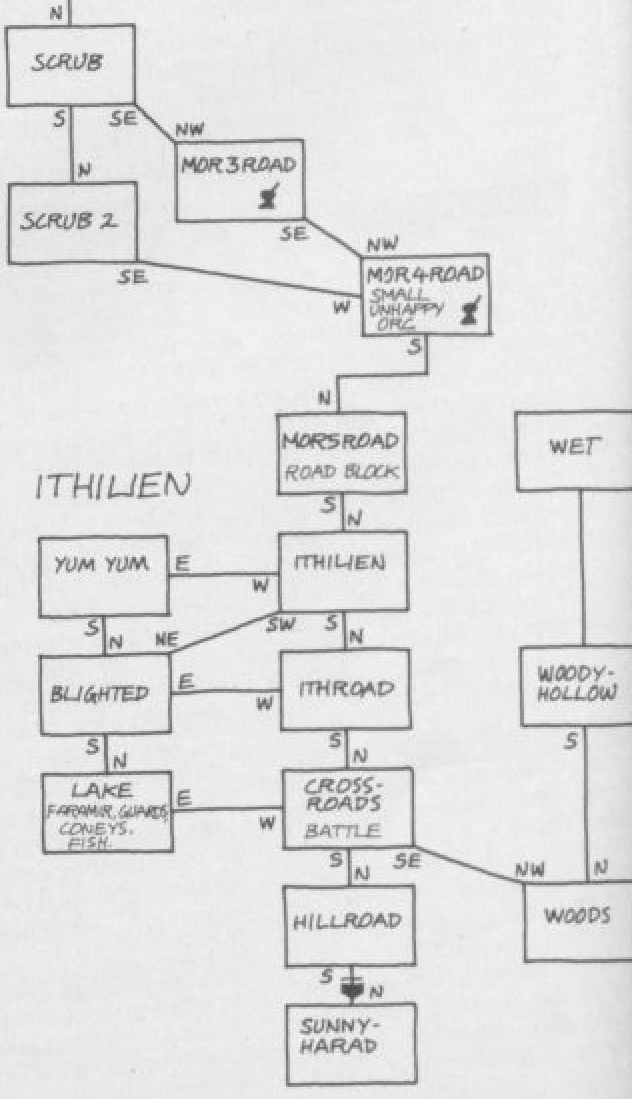


INFO EXCHANGE

- I've had a couple of plaintive queries about a game called **Blizzard Pass** by Tynesoft. I don't know this one myself so will some of you please write to the Panker family at Birchwood, Nunclose, Armathwaite, Carlisle CA4 9TN and also to Julia Camm of 11 Pickard St, Greaves, Lancaster. Both groups of travellers can't get back across a 30-foot fissure. They all have the metal ring and rope and have tried throwing them after linking them together, all to no effect as the rope won't catch on the other side. Post haste if you know the answer! Ta.
- Anthony Saunders, 6 Chequers Parade, Prestwood, Bucks HP16 0PN is trying to locate Black Knight Software or, preferably, a copy of their game **Sword and Shield**. If any of you know where they can be found please write and tell him. He says he'll be ever so grateful.
- Pippo the Gross of 2 Braisgate, Skelton, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 9SQ will help with **Sherlock**, **Valkyrie 17**, **Lord of Time**, **Return to Eden** and **Gremlins** in exchange for a 13p or 18p stamp, depending on whether you want your reply quick or slow. You know what to do.
- Last, further news on **Adventure Contact**, the game writers' fanzine that had to wind up recently. Any outstanding subscriptions etc will be paid back by the previous editor – no problem there. And, better news, another adventurer will be taking over the production of the fanzine. If you want any info write with SAE to Colin Page, Kingfisher Restaurant, 91 Palmerston Rd, Boscombe, Bournemouth BH1 4HP.

MAP CHAT





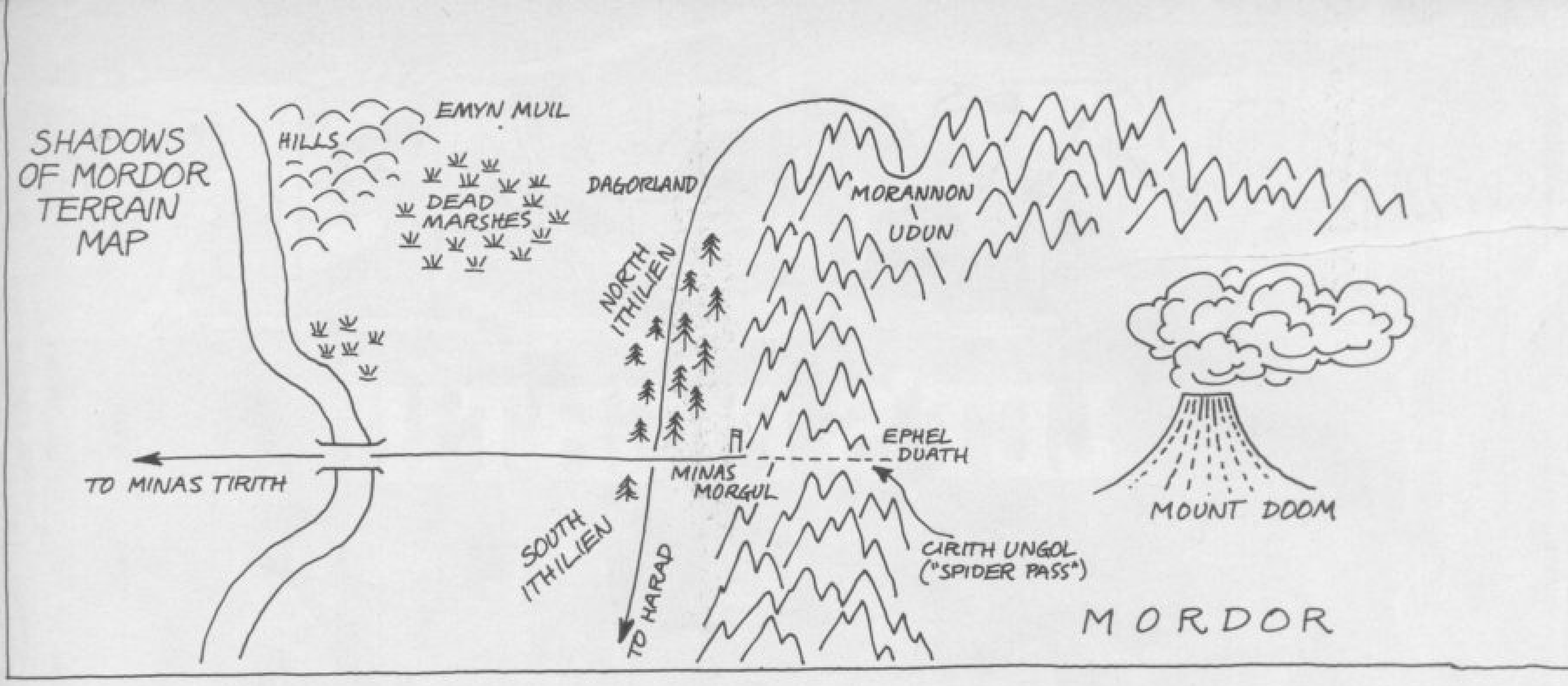
In this MapChat Adventure Special we print the difinitive map of

Shadows of Mordor

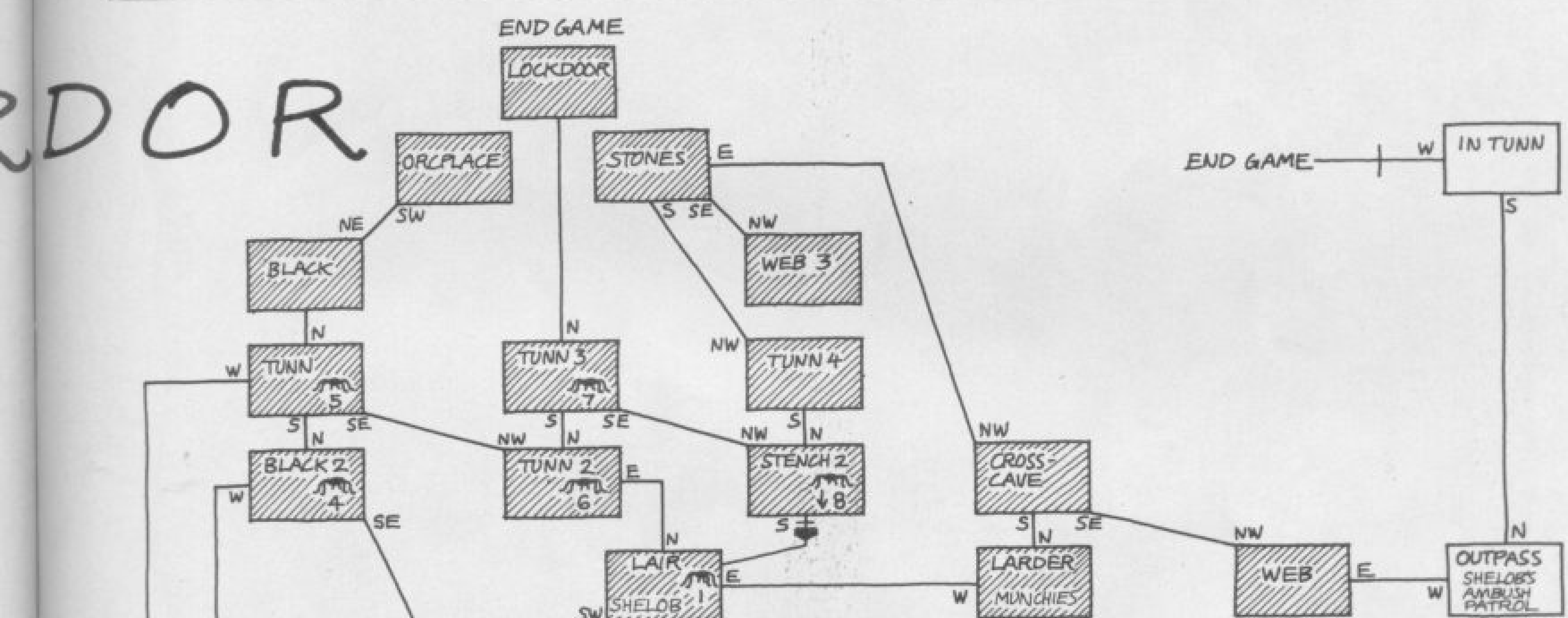
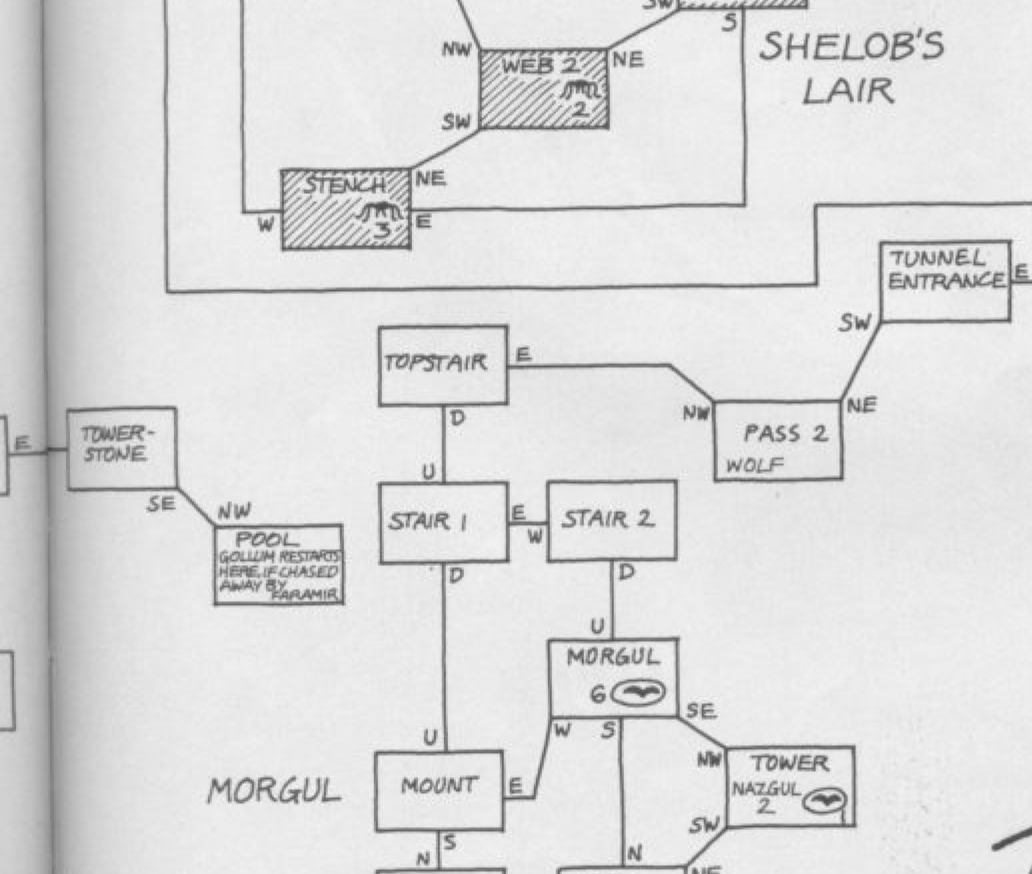
About the map:

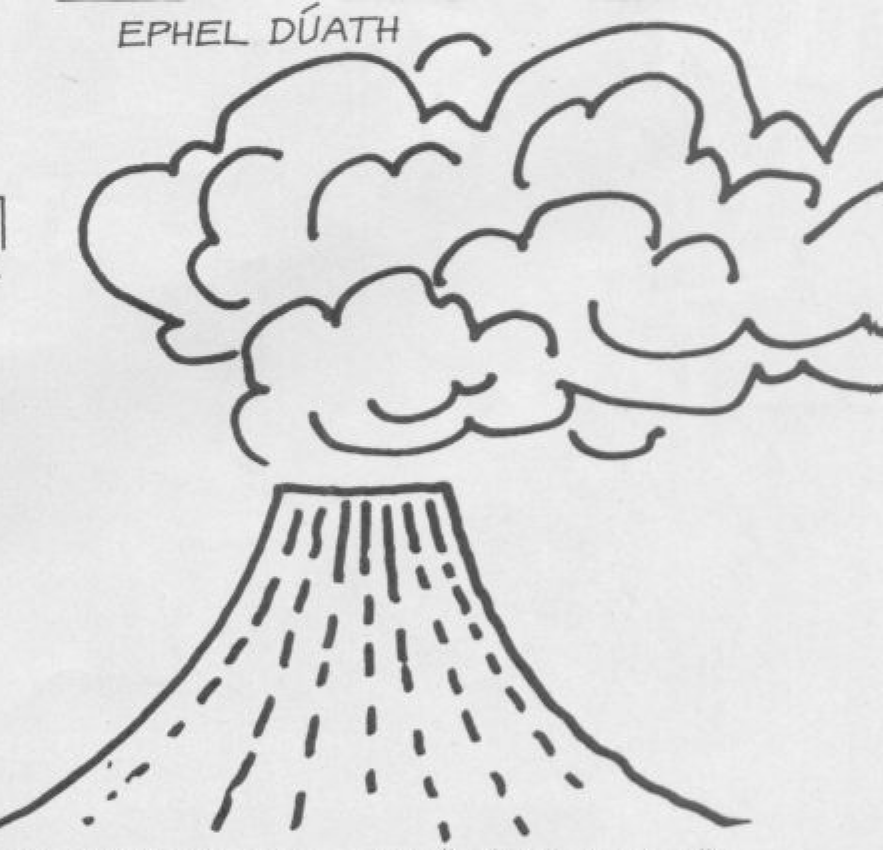
- The 'creature symbols' (see the key the symbols for Shelolo, Nazgul1, Nazgul2, small orcs and Gollum) show the paths of wandering monsters. These creatures will move in a predetermined path unless an encounter with the adventurers causes them to change their normal behaviour
- Shaded locations are *dark*, and characters all require either *matches* or the *Vial of Galadriel* to see
- One-way exits are marked by an arrow. Characters can move in the direction of the arrows, but can't return along the same path

The game starts at the East bank of the River Andoin, progresses through Emyn Mull, through the Dead Marshes to Dagorlad, down to Ithillen, across Minas Morgul to the path across the mountains (Cirith Ungol) and through to Ephel Duath. The destination of the party is Mount Doom



RDOR

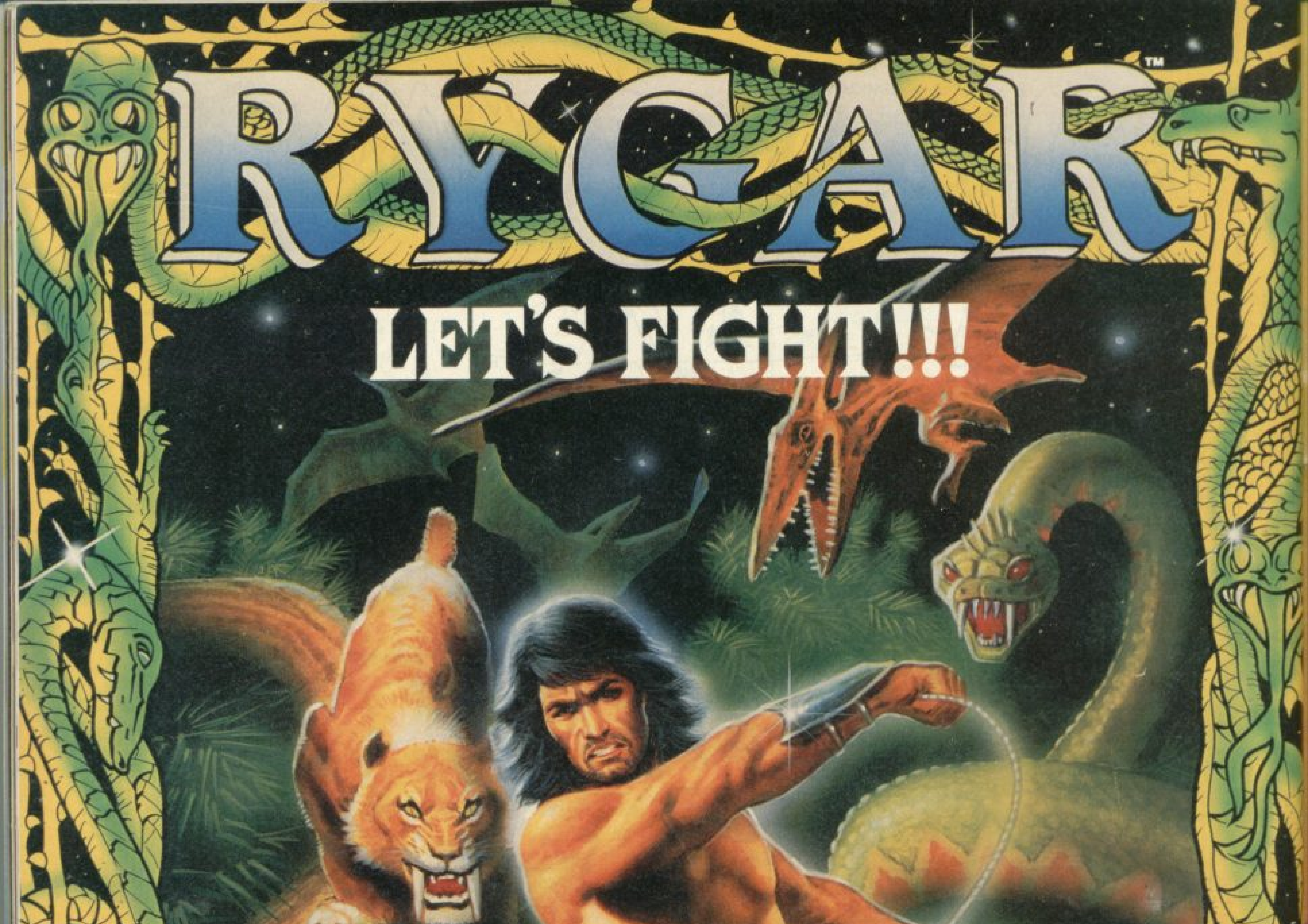





And with that, I'm off to quaff a few ales and talk of brave journeys and bold deeds (I said talk, not actually *do*).

Until next moon■

Gordo Greatbelly



From the Dawn of Time comes a Legendary Warrior to thrill players everywhere....

4.5 billion years have passed since the earth's creation. Many dominators have ruled in all their glory. But Time, their greatest enemy ultimately defeated their reign.

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Cassette	Disk	Cassette	Cassette	Disk

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SCREEN SHOTS FROM ARCADE VERSION.

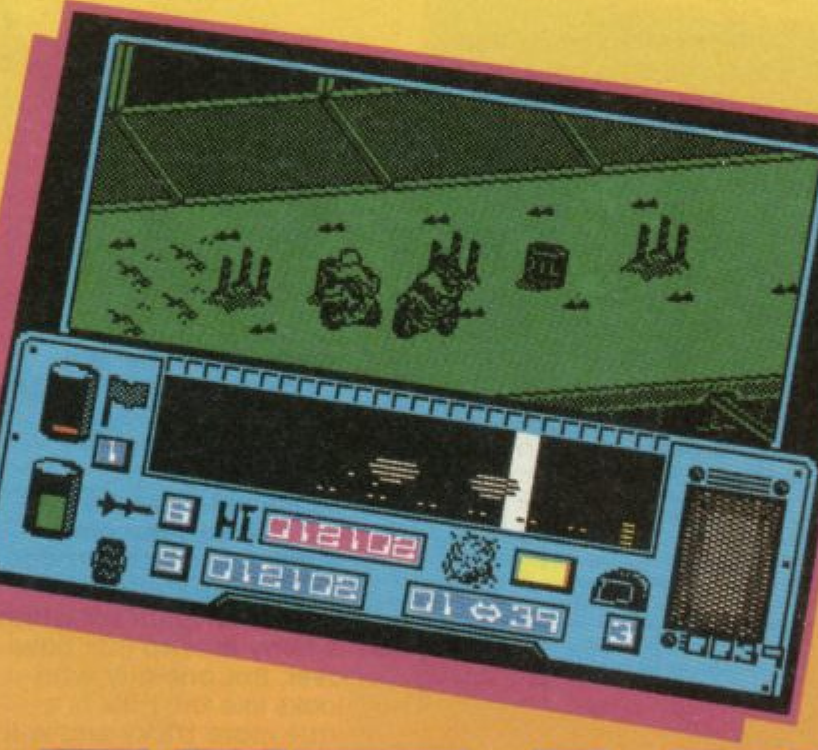
U.S. Gold Ltd., Units 2/3 Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel: 021 356 3388

TECMO™

MEAN STREAK

Imagine **Paper Boy** with firepower and you have some of the flavour of **Mean Streak** – new out from Mirrorsoft.

Where you had to dodge around obstacles and deliver papers in **Paperboy** in this game you have to dodge obstacles and blow away a whole series of computer controlled rival bikes.



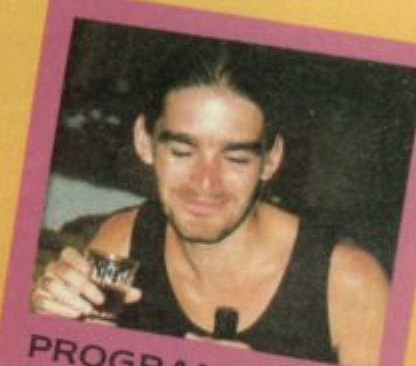
FACTS BOX

Fast paced motorbike game. Lot's of thrills and spills and lots of destruction. It's sort of Paperboy with blasting

MEAN STREAK
Label: Mirrorsoft
Author: Byron Nilson
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Graham Taylor

★★★★☆ 8

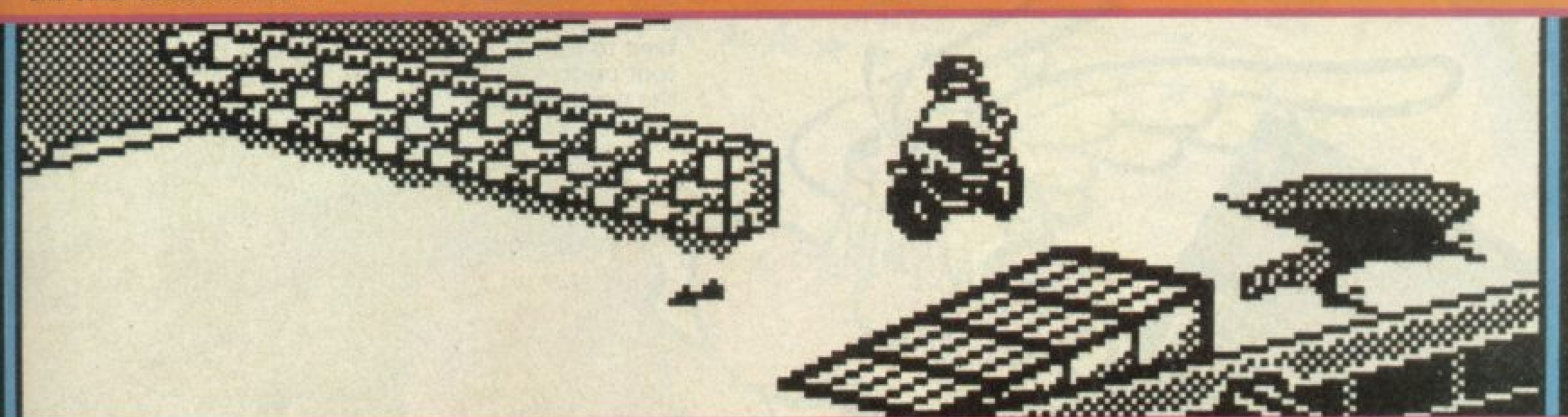


PROGRAMMERS

BYRON NILSON has only been in the programming business for a year or so and **Mean Streak** is his second project.
SOFTOGRAPHY: **Little Computer People** (*Activision*, 1987).

We're not talking push bikes either – these machines are mean.

You control a bike speeding across a featureless landscape. Featureless that is except for assorted brick walls, tin-tacks and other obstacles that will



total or seriously damage your bike.

And here and there are useful items you actually want to bump into – bonus oil (for causing oil slicks), extra fuel and missiles.

The objective is pretty simple – destroy the other bikes and get to the end of each level within a tight time limit.

This is also going to involve carefully timed jumps over ramps and sometimes the destruction of barriers with only moments in which to respond.

On early levels dealing with the bikes is mainly a matter of getting behind them and blasting but as they get cleverer you will need to swerve and weave your way around. One entertaining option is to barge the bikes on to a ramp which runs along the side of the road. The barging can get very frenzied as the two bikes push back and forth – not unlike a James Bond film actually. More fun is to be had by dropping oil slicks...

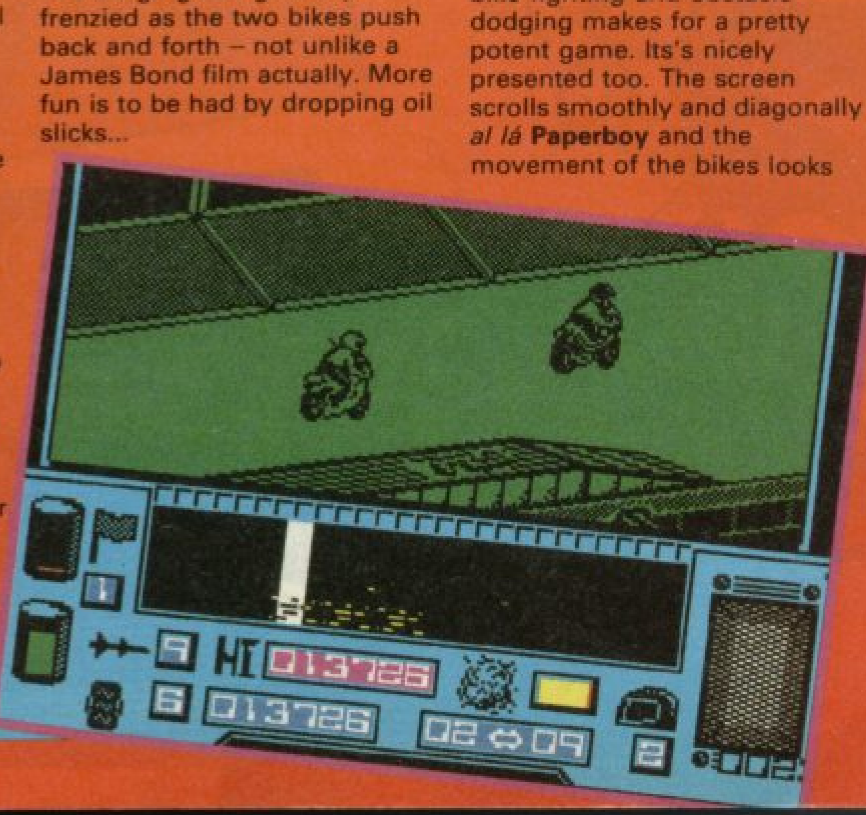
The combination of bike-to-bike fighting and obstacle dodging makes for a pretty potent game. Its's nicely presented too. The screen scrolls smoothly and diagonally *al lá* **Paperboy** and the movement of the bikes looks pretty authentic.

On a game as fast moving as this the screen is inevitably two-colour though exactly which two colours you get depends on the level.

It must be said, the backgrounds are pretty plain and uninteresting but then the bikes are really where most of the action is.

The only real criticism I have is that after a point there are few surprises in the game – the levels look pretty much the same and only the intelligence and numbers of the enemy and the variety of obstacles changes.

To be fair though tactics is the point of the game rather than lots of vastly different levels and in that sense it succeeds magnificently■



ÖUTL

OCT COIN-OP

Law and order are ideas of the past. Thugs lurk on every street corner. Flick knives are flicked, whips crack the air and baseball bats bounce thuddingly off your bonce should you be daft enough to step out alone onto the meanest streets in town.

Yet what can you do? Your girl's been kidnapped from under your nose and you're out for revenge. Taito's *Double Dragon* is another martial arts game albeit with lots of original features. Sure you can kick and thump the thugs to pulp, but you can also use whatever happens to be around as well. So if there's a rock handy, pick it up and chuck it, that goes for cardboard boxes and barrels too.

You need all the additional weapons you can find to overcome some of the later groups. A pyjama-suited woman with a penchant for whips is fairly easy to just bowl over. But one guy who looks like the Hulk is a little more tricky and will take several punches before he sinks to the ground stunned. When you do manage to kick one of the baddies down, grab their weapon and use it on the others. The whip's handy and the baseball bat, if used properly, causes a fair amount of damage.

The central sprites are very large and detailed but controlling them takes some getting used to. There's a punch and kick button as well as the joystick – sounds fairly easy to master – you may think but you're given no time to practice. Put one foot on to the streets and the gang attacks. You won't last long and don't get much of a chance to build up your skill to begin with.

The scenarios are detailed and varied. Use ladders to climb out of trouble, fight your way over the roof tops and watch out for ambushes in the warehouse. The action's almost non-stop, though a little repetitive and the two player game is bags more fun than playing on your own■

CLARE EDGELEY



TOP TEN COIN-OPS OCTOBER

1	Midnight Landing	Taito
2	Wec Le Mans	Konami
3	Roadblaster	Atari
4	Black Tiger	CapCom
5	World Wars	Taito
6	R-Type	Irem
7	Flying Shark	Taito
8	Double Dragon	Taito
9	1943	Taito
10	Savio	Konami

This list is compiled with the help of one arcade in London's West End and is not necessarily the case countrywide.
Thanks to John Stergides of Electrocoin.



VIDEO CARTOONS

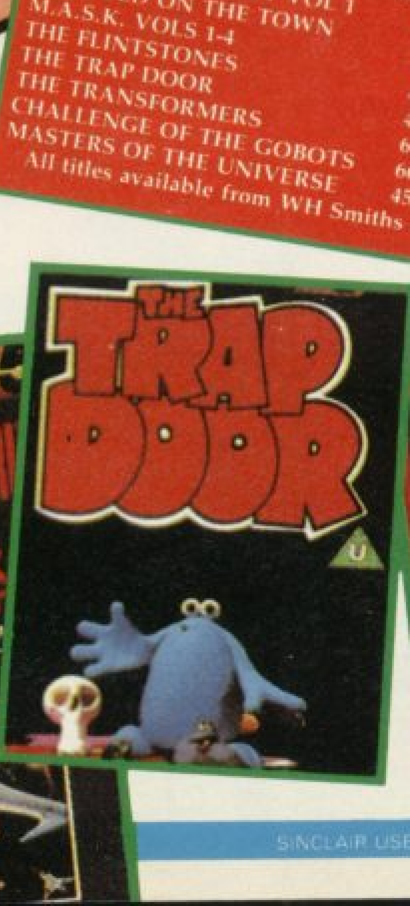
You've seen the TV series, you've bought the game, you've knitted the tea cosy – now get the video. Ten collections of animated adventures under a tenner, all of them closely connected with Spectrum games in one way or another . . .

ASTERIX & CLEOPATRA	60 mins	Hollywood Nites	£9.99
DANGER MOUSE TO THE RESCUE	48 mins	Video Collection	£6.99
INSPECTOR GADGET VOL 1	60 mins	Video Collection	£6.99
GARFIELD ON THE TOWN	25 mins	Channel 5	£6.99
M.A.S.K. VOLS 1-4	66 mins	Video Collection	£8.99
THE FLINTSTONES	48 mins	Video Collection	£6.99
THE TRAP DOOR	49 mins	Channel 5	£7.99
THE TRANSFORMERS	64 mins	Video Gems	£7.99
CHALLENGE OF THE GOBOTS	66 mins	Children's Video	£8.99
MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE	45 mins	Video Collection	£6.99

All titles available from WH Smiths and other large video stockists■

CHRIS JENKINS







LANDS



KITES!

Gone are the days when a kite was a simple cotton trapezoid on a string – now you can dominate the skies with a whole range of hi-tech flying objects, many based on aerodynamic principles learned from high performance jets.

● UFO SAM, for instance, consists of two interlocking silverised discs, spinning around a central pivot. Costing £7.95, it comes with a warning against flying it near missile sites!

● POWELL STUNT KITE, has to be the choice for show-offs. It has two control lines, one for each hand, which allows you to make it perform amazing loops, rolls and dives. Two versions are available, one in plastic, one in high stress nylon.



● WYCOMBE DELTA is an amazing hang-glider shaped kite, worth every penny of its £24.95 price tag for the pose value.

● FACET is based on the designs of Japanese fighting kites, and consists of two sets of five surfaces intersecting each other at right angles, mounted on a bamboo frame. Not one for stunt flying, but an amazing sight. Flying tonight for £17.50.

● GUNTHER FERRY – strictly for experienced kiters – might be a desirable peripheral at £5.50. It's a sort of flying wing with a stabiliser, attached to the cable of your existing kite. It zooms up and down flapping its wings frantically.

● And if you reckon kites are BORING ... HINTERLAND ROKIT, at £5.95, is basically a plastic bottle with a compressor pump, which is supposed to fly twenty metres straight up.

All kites available from The Kite Store, 69B Neal Street, Covent Garden, London WC2■

CHRIS JENKINS



Pop Poster Chart

1	MADONNA – Who's That Girl World Tour '87	Verkerke
2	ELVIS PRESLEY – The Kind	Abacus
3	U2 – Bono	Anabus
4	TINA TURNER – Live On Stage	Verkerke
5	MEL & KIM – Showing Out	Anabus
6	DON JOHNSON – Miami Vice	Verkere
7	PRINCE – Live On Stage	Anabus
8	NICK KAMEN – Portrait	Verkerke
9	BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN – Born in the USA	Anabus
10	PET SHOP BOYS – Boy	Anabas

Compiled from a range available at the Virgin Megastore, London.

HEADLINE VIEWS

OK. So covering hair in SU is a bit odd. It's like this: one of our spies secretly went to visit a rival Spectrum title and when asked what they were like said "they spent all their time talking about their hair – it seems to be a major porblem." So boys and girls (you know who you are) here is the SU guide to hairstyles. guide to hairstyles.

1) **Greasy Old Badger:** Easily obtainable, in fact. Needs little work cut-wise, as, providing sufficient gel/3 in 1 is used, the look can be achieved with virtually anyone's hair – G.O.B. cuts are favoured by pop stars who have decided that looking like one of the early Action Men with plastic moulded hair is bound to shoot them up the charts, and trendies who copy pop stars.

2) **Tousled and Damp:** Surprisingly popular in the rainy old streets of London. You'll need to have fairly wavy hair for this one. You need a number 3 blade up the sides, up to just above the ears, and pretty short on the back too. The top, however, is entirely up to you. Many opt for a kind of mop effect. A T.A.D. will ensure that you never look too preened.

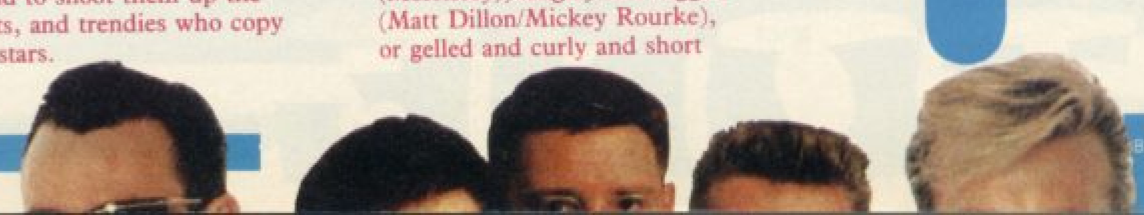
3) **The Flat Top:** Highly desirable among those who wish to appear aggressive. The F.T. looks exactly as it sounds; simple, effective. Flat Tops are generally sported to best effect on afro style hair as it looks acceptable when cut very short. Others can rarely carry off the F.T. without lots of gel to hold down that horrible spikey bit that always sticks up just at the top and to the left.

4) **Short Back and Sides:** Scope for many many different variants here. No matter how unspeakable you may believe your hair to be, a S.B.A.S. of some sort is the cut for you. Possible tops include: Curly sticky-out front (Sean Penn), Spikey-wavey and mad (Morrissey), tangley and rugged (Matt Dillon/Mickey Rourke), or gelled and curly and short (the normal looking one in *Curiosity Killed the Cat*).

5) **Utterly Ghastly Haircut:** A big hit with the shockingly vain poseurs to be found in the Covent Garden area. U.G.H. has attained some sort of desirability, though heaven only knows why. It looks as if a crew-cut had layers of inch-thick hair plonked on the top (usually jet-black or blond). Famous people don't go for this one, as their managers won't let them, knowing that such a shocking style is very very difficult to change quickly without punch-grafting. Should you want a haircut like this, you shouldn't be reading this piece, as you are obviously beyond help.

JIM DOUGLAS





TWILIGHT

HEADCOACH

STRATEGY Label: **Addictive** Author: **Simon Davies** Price: **£2.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **none** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

An excellent and deep strategy program now released on budget that will appeal to Am-Foot fanatics as well

It was the day before the first of the play-offs. We'd had a good season so far and were determined to win through to the Superbowl. As coach, it was all down to me to decide who was going to be playing and what tactics were to be used. Sounds like a nightmare, don't it. Headcoach **is a sort of a yankee** Football Manager. **It's entirely menu-driven and you have to take the part of headcoach or manager of your favourite team and try to play then through to the big 'S'. Before each match you have to decide which players will be playing and in what position. Then if that ain't enough, between each play you have to choose the tactics. Phew!**

Headcoach **is brilliant. Anyone who misses it at this price is a real fumbler■**

★★★★☆ **8**

ROCKMAN

ARCADE Label: **Alligata** Price: **£1.99** Author: **Xavi Martin Pucke** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Attractive arcade adventure with sound effects that have to be heard to be believed

Rockman . . . Roc . . . roc . . ro.ro.ro . .rockman! Yes, believe it or not, this is what your Spectrum will scream.

Were it not for the wonderful digitised speech, this game would maybe be pretty average but, as it is, it isn't. You are Rockman, stuck in a vaguely Wally-style world rescuing the Holy Grail from the caves of Sabhatez. Collect keys, hearts and scrolls to get through. Keys to open doors, scrolls to get past guards and hearts keep you alive. Also 12 cups have to be found to piece together a shield.

Rockman **is quite taxing to play – just about worth buying at the price for the game alone – but it's the sound that really brings the game out. Along with the digitised speech at the start, there is a good title tune and some terrific spot effects during the game■**

★★★☆☆ **7**

RAPID FIRE

ARCADE Label: **Mastertronic** Author: **Icon Design** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Chris Jenkins**

Below average arcade effort imitating the merely average Cobra and Death Wish licences

Could have been good, but ain't. Rapid Fire **is one of those desperate mixtures of themes where valiant undercover cops battle to disable plasma computers (huh?) and power electrodes (wha....?) in order to destroy a warehouse full of criminals.**

Run left and right, shoot diagonally upwards to pick off the snipers, jump over bombs, leap up to shake off unarmed baddies.

The scenario's there, but the graphics certainly aren't. The horizontally-scrolling backgrounds are pretty dull, the heroic cop runs like a pregnant duck and his macho machinegun looks like a broomhandle.

Not interesting enough to keep you going through the five levels – more a case of 'rapid boredom' if you ask me■

★★★☆☆ **6**

FOOTBALL DIRECTOR

SIMULATION Label: **D&H** 19 Milne Road, Stevenage, Herts SG2 8LL Author: **Huggard & DeSallis** Price: **£8.95** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **none** Reviewer: **Chris Jenkins**

Another attempt at a football management game – aren't there enough about? Bit pricey too

It must be getting hard to think of new titles for football simulations, what with Football Manager, World Cup Fiasco **(sorry,** Carnival**),** Soccer Boss, International Soccer **and so on ad nauseam. If you seriously think that simulating it on a computer is worthwhile when you could be watching it on the TV or even playing it in the sunshine,** Football Director **has all the features you could want: four leagues, twenty teams each, definable teams, substitutions, sending offs, buying and selling players and shares, finance, tax, even sackings and crowd violence. Graphics are non-existent, instructions are minimal and there's an adorable feature by which after you've saved a game position to tape, the program crashes at the end of every season. If you can put up with that, then you should get a fair kick out of** Football Director. **(Kick – geddit?) More sophis than** Football Manager, **Director may be, but then that's now a quarter of the price■**

★★☆☆☆ **4**

ZONE

GRA

Broom broom. BMX's are out, racing cars are in. Why drive a silly pushbike round a dirt track when you can drive the real thing.

A Formula 1 racing machine with 200 horses under the bonnet (or something like that!?!)

And why wait for Activision's coin-op licence for **Super Sprint** when Code Masters gives you this now. Not that **Grand Prix Simulator** looks anything like the **Super Sprint** coin-op of course. **Grand Prix Simulator** is an entirely original game idea. Of course it is, ow! A flying pig just attacked me...

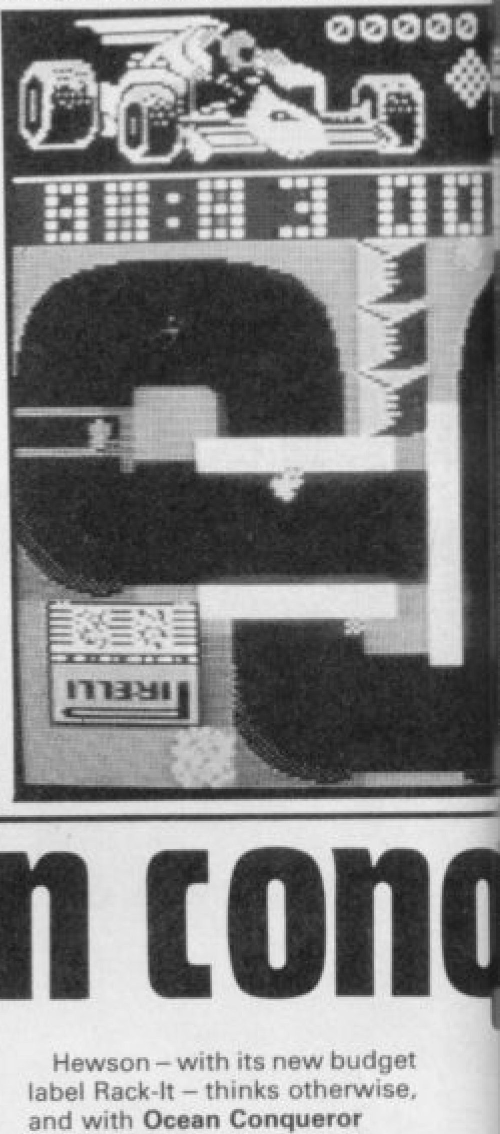
Anyway, let's get this review on the road.

In **Grand Prix Simulator** you drive your thoroughbred racing machine through... erm... well, quite a few levels. Either against a droid car or, in two-player mode, you and a friend can race each other.

Even in two-player mode, that ol' droid car is still present, just to add a bit more urgency to the race. And to move up to the next level all you have to do is simply get to the finish line in an allotted time? Alas no. To qualify for the next course you have to get a position better than the droid, ie you have to beat it. If you don't then you're out; in two-player mode this means that for you both to qualify for the next race, you both have to beat the computer generated car.

Graphically this game is not what you'd call stunning, but the tracks are laid out well and are hard enough to provide challenge.

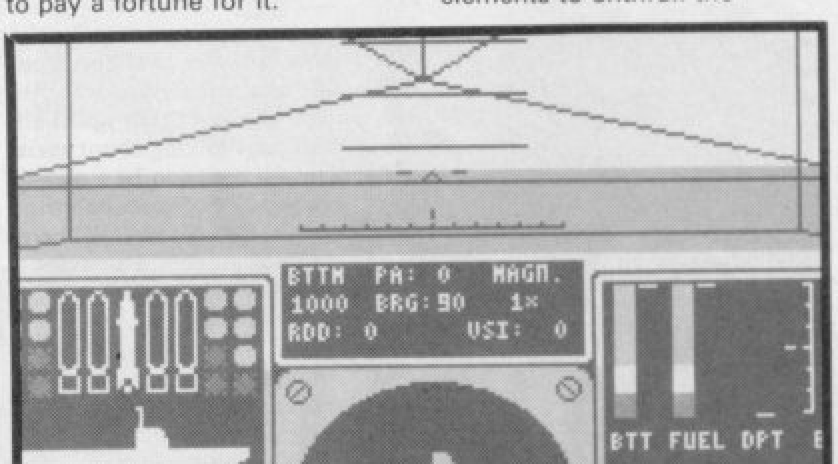
Unlike **BMX Simulator** you are not just given bare dirt to ride on. **GPS** tracks have bridges to go over and under.



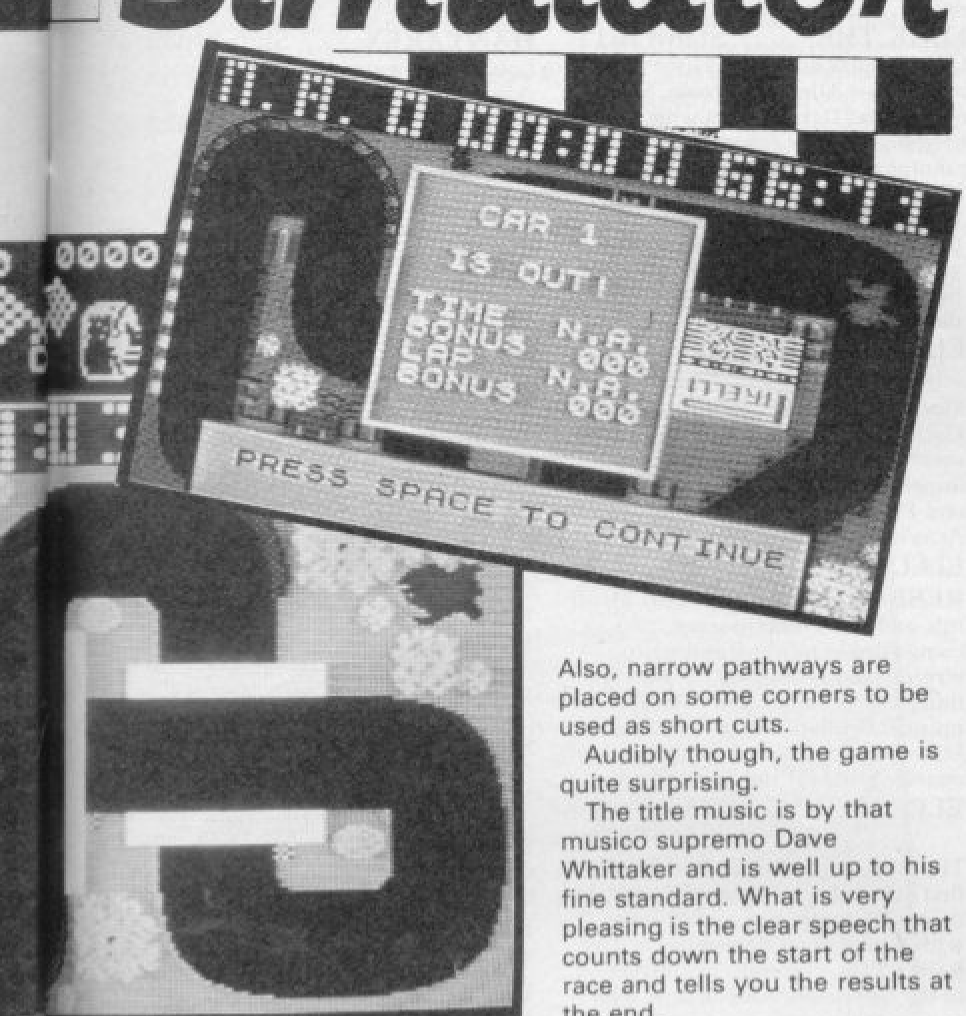
OCEAN CONQ

There seems to be an assumption among software house that if you want a simulation-type game rather than a plain ordinary shoot-'em-up, you're prepared to pay a fortune for it.

Hewson – with its new budget label Rack-It – thinks otherwise, and with **Ocean Conqueror** proves that detailed simulations can be inexpensive, and can also retain enough arcade elements to enthrall the



ND PRIX Simulator



FACTS BOX

Superb follow-up to BMX Simulator with a look and feel reminiscent of Super Sprint. At the price, how can it fail?

GRAND PRIX SIMULATOR
Label: Code Masters
Author: The Oliver Twins, Serge Dosang
Price: £1.99
Memory: 48K/128K (enhanced sound)

Reviewer: Tony Dillon

8

STRATEGY SIMULATION REVIEW

Whatever the shortcomings of the graphic presentation, the one thing the Code Masters do seem to know all about is playability – it's really great fun and pretty flippin' addictive. Enough to drive ya crazy (joke).

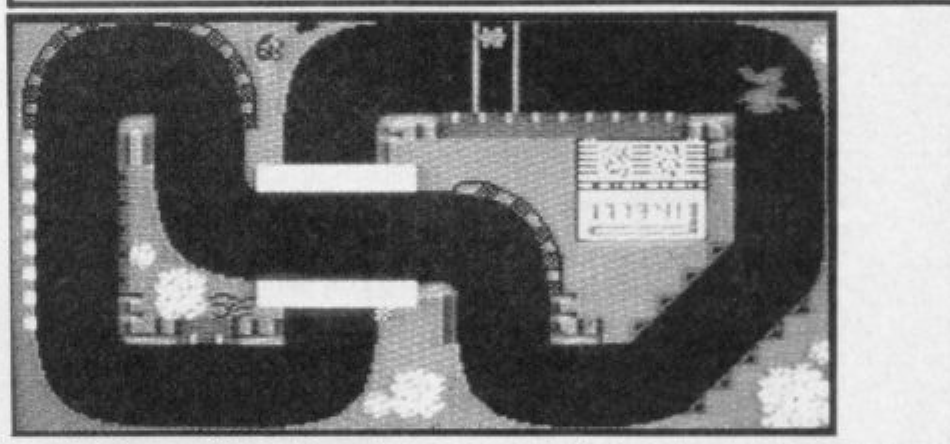
Cracking stuff. Straight to number one, no probs, I'd say■

PROGRAMMERS

Grand Prix Simulator is the combined effort of a number of people. The original concept was the work of the mysterious Olivers, the Spectrum conversion was by Serge Dosang with graphics by Mervin James and music by the ubiquitous Dave Whittaker.

THE OLIVERS have worked on a number of Codemasters' titles, both on the Spectrum and Amstrad.

SOFTOGRAPHY: **Robin Hood** (*Codemasters*, 1986), **Ghost Hunters** (*Codemasters*, 1987), **Dizzy** (*Codemasters*, 1987), **Professional Skiing Simulator** (*Codemasters*, 1987 [to be released])



Also, narrow pathways are placed on some corners to be used as short cuts.

Audibly though, the game is quite surprising.

The title music is by that musico supremo Dave Whittaker and is well up to his fine standard. What is very pleasing is the clear speech that counts down the start of the race and tells you the results at the end.

QUEROR

dedicated blasters.

Ocean Conqueror puts you in control of a submarine whose mission it is to disrupt enemy supply lines by sinking freighters. To make things move a little faster than they do with more stodgy sub-simulators like Microprose's **Silent Service**, there's a time limit of eighteen game hours in which you have to clear an entire sector and then return to home base.

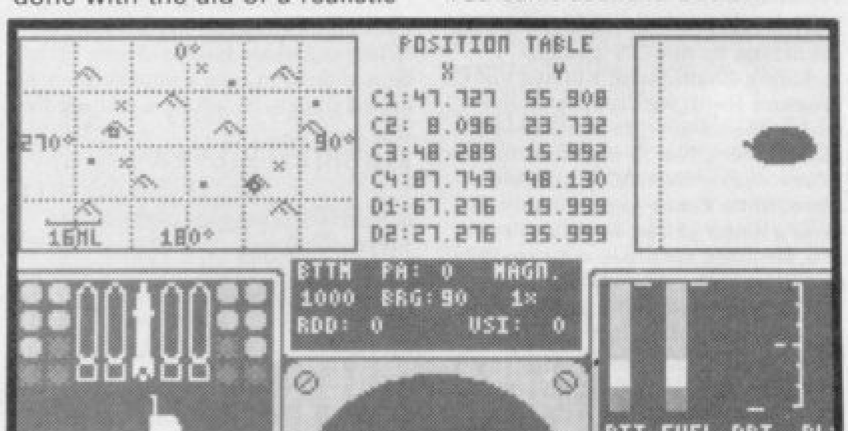
The view through the periscope is presented in animated wire frame graphics. The game starts at home base (so don't launch a torpedo or rush full steam ahead – back out slowly or you'll do more than chip your paintwork).

The admirably detailed control panel includes status indicators for throttle, ballast tanks, battery charge, motor in use, rudder angle, hydroplane angle, and ammunition among others. Although this gives you a lot of control keys to remember, things are easier if you use a joystick for direction control and missile firing.

You have two forms of armament. Torpedos, which are not steerable, and guided missiles which of course are (but which are in shorter supply). There's a nice fly-by-wire display showing fuel and altitude when you launch a missile, which is pretty reminiscent of **Starglider**.

Tracking down the targets is done with the aid of a realistic cathode-ray type radar display, which can operate in two ranges, and a map, which of course shows the positions of fixed points such as drilling rigs and lighthouses, but not of ships. A co-ordinate table locates these, as well as your home docks.

A time compression mode is used to speed what would otherwise be hours spent steaming across the huge playing area to the next target. You can't use it to outrun enemy missiles or torpedos, though!



FACTS BOX

Neat budget simulator offering a good blend of complexity and playability. Sacrifices some accuracy for action

OCEAN CONQUEROR
Label: Rack-It
Author: Peter Vitray, Lajos Palanki
Price: £2.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

8

Ocean Conqueror is perhaps too inaccurate to satisfy total simulator buffs, and too complex for those seeking a straightforward shoot-'em-up. However, if you're after something which neatly combines elements of expensive simulations and the excitement of **Starglider** at a bargain price, this could be exactly what you're looking for■

OK so it's the biggest show of the year and it's great. But being the biggest means it's also the easiest to get lost in. Check out SU's incredible guide to all that's Spectrum at the show – including where to see previews of most of the good stuff being put together for Christmas. The show is on at Olympia in London on Friday to Sunday 25th-27th September, open from 10 am to 7 pm every day

PCW

ACE – see Edge

ACTIVISION Stand 1417
Including Infocom, System 3 and Gamestar. Demos of **Rampage**, its coin-op licence, and **Predator**, developed with System 3. There'll also be a very early sneak at System 3's **Bankok Knights**, the follow up to **Last Ninja** –which also should be being demoed. Then there's the terribly exciting TV take-over, **Knightmare**. All this and games, T-shirts and other goodies to flog an' all

ADDICTIVE – see Prism Leisure

ADVANCE Stand 3114
Preview running of **Olympic Watersports**, its newey and for sale there'll be **Butch Hard Guy**, **Hardball** and, of course, **Indoor Sports**

ALTERNATIVE Stand 3037
Will be previewing **Microball**, its pinball conversion which sounds wonderful, along with **Metallyx** a weird arcade game. On sale will be two new adventures, **Excalibur** and **Football Crazy** among others

AMSTRAD Stand 1403
Amstrad will, of course, be showing the 128K+3 off for all it's worth – after the price cut it's pretty nifty value – and denying that a new machine is just around the corner, again

ANCO Stand 3053
Maybe **International Events** will be for sale, and maybe it won't. Should be a demo at least

ARIOLASOFT – see Reaktor, Starlight or Viz Designs

BUBBLE BUS Stand 1008
Previewing a host of newies on the stand. **Endeavour**, a variant on the **Trivial Pursuit** game. Also **Curse of the Crown**, an adventure will be for sale, and you can sneak a look at the forthcoming **E.A.L.** which it's not talking about yet

BULLDOG – see Mastertronic

BUG BYTE Stand 1621
As well as all of its previous games, there'll be showing **Headstart** and **STI** – an arcade game and humorous adventure, respectively. Also new out on BB is **Handball Maradona** and **Defcom**

CASCADE Stand 3015
For sale on the stand there'll be **Implosion** and **Ace 2**, a space shoot out and combat simulation, respectively. There will also be a demo of **Ringworld** a new 3D vector-graphics shoot out, where your opponents are planets. (Could be whacky?)

CDS Stand 1010
Good news for 128K+3 owners. **Brian Clough's Football Fortunes** will be at the stand on disc. There will also be a couple of Amstrad games shortly to be converted: **Mah Jong**, an ancient classic oriental tile game and **Roulette**, ancient silly gambling game, almost extinct

CHEETAH Stand 3061
As well as its extensive range of joysticks and music equipment, there will be two or three special products, that Cheetah isn't talking aobut at the moment. Could be worth a decco

CODEMASTERS Stand 3025
Concentrating on a 'meet the programmers' sort of a theme for its stand. The plan is that rather than do things for the retail side of things that the general public should be able to meet and greet the programmers they know and love from the Codemasters label. There will, of course, be the usual posters, T-shirts and stuff as well as demos of **Pro Ski Simulator** and **Fruit Machine Simulator**

COMPUTER BOOKSHOPS Stand 1006
The place to be if you want to pick up anything literary about Spectrums (apart from the SU stand of course). There will be titles ranging from twiddly stuff like *The Child's Guide to Sinclair Spectrums* right up to the heavy duty *Spectrum Shadow Rom Disassembly*

CRL Stand 1517
Nothing for sale on this stand, though there will be a demo of **Oink!** up and running, along with finished samples of **Ballbreaker** and **3D Gamemaker** (with which you can construct Ultimate-style 3D adventures). There will also be **Mandroid** on the C64, currently being converted to the Spectrum

DATEL Stand not confirmed
Interface city! If you want to connect your Spectrum to anything under the sun, you'll probably find the interface to do it here. There will also be a chance to see the new Genius Mouse art package, which comes bundled with **Artist II** from Softechnics

D+H GAMES Stand 3096/1
Will be previewing its **Football Director** on the 128K, along with the new 48K game, **Coach**. It'll also be selling its other titles, including **Football Director** (48) and **International Manager**

DIGITAL INTEGRATION Stand 1201
Will be previewing its new games, **Bobsleigh** and **Advanced Tactical Fighter**. There'll also be a preview of **F16 Combat Pilot**, its Xmas biggie. On sale there will be old classics like **Tomahawk and Fighter Pilot**

DOMARK Stand 3035
Launching its new TV games, including **Countdown**, **Bulleye** and **Treasure Hunt**, with a spectacular look at the all-new, re-vamped **Blockbusters**. Not to mention the Jeffrey Archer licence, **Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less**. There's also to be a demo of **The Krypton Factor** and, surprise, surprise, not sure if I actually believe this one but there you are, **Star Wars on the Spectrum**. Oh, and **Living Daylights**. Of course

DURELL Stand 3146
Durell will be previewing two new games, **Chain Reaction** (to be released two weeks after the show) and **Spitfire** (to be released about a month after that). There'll also be a new compilation, **Big 4 Volume II**, which will be on sale to all and sundry. And for those of you with an eye for a bargain, hundreds upon hundreds of old games will be sold at cut down prices. So if you're after a copy of **Thanatos** or **Saboteur**, get on down

EDGE, THE Stand 1611
Lots of things going on. Three arcade machines – **Alien Syndrome**, **Soldier of Light** and **Darius**, all of which have been licensed for conversion. Also running will be previews of **Garfield**, **Warlock** and **Inside Outing**. There will also be competitions and freebies, and of course our cöver game this month, **Xecutor** from Ace. Softechnics may preview its new database **The Flier**

ELECTRIC DREAMS Stand 1317
Motor racing is the theme, and Electric Dreams is showing preview versions of its coin-op converts **Super Sprint** (Atari), **Hang-On** (Sega) and **Fire Trap** (Data East). And, Like Activision, trillions being flogged

ELECTROMUSIC RESEARCH Stand 3036
Bits and bobs to help your composing, sampling and score-writing, should that be the sort of thing you're into. Demonstrations of musical brilliance from EMR's own Mike Beecher (nice one Mike) and, of course, MIDI for the Spectrum

ELECTRONIC ARTS Stand 1517
The No 1 US Software House on its first ever outing over here. There'll be demos of **Arctic Fox** and **Pegasus**, with a look at a C64 version of **The Bard's Tale**, currently in conversion to the Spectrum. And anyone who wants to become one of EA's Hundred Players, get on over there and find out what's going on!

ELITE Stand 1209
Demonstrations of all its up-coming Christmas releases on video for your delight. These include **Thundercats**, **Elite Collection** (a double cassette, eight game compilation) and **Buggy Boy**. About one thousand visitors to the stand will be asked to fill in a questionnaire about likes and dislikes, and there may even be the odd free poster lurking about

EMAP – see Sinclair User

EPYX – see US Gold

FIREBIRD Stand 1011
Lots of new games on show, including **Sidewize**, **Mystery of the Nile** and **Bubble Bobble**. There'll also be a chance to take a sneaky peek at **Flying Shark**, its hot new coin-op tie-in

FIREBIRD SILVER Stand 1011
As well as selling all of the Silver range, there will be a chance to see **Car Wars** and a new arcade licence – in coin-op form – **Peter Pacrat** (Who?)

GAMESTAR – see Activision

GO! – see US Gold

GREMLIN Stand 1211
Mega previews of all its spanking new releases for Autumn and the run-up to Christmas, including **Basil the Great Mouse Detective**, **Blood Valley**, **Masters of the Universe – The Movie**, **Mask II**, **Gary Lineker's Super Soccer**, need we say more? Not to mention competitions and promotions which are very Top Secret, and an undercover Gremlin of sorts

HANTAREX Stand 4030
Lots of hardware – mainly monitors, printers and keyboards

HEWSON Stand 1622
Showing off its new budget range, Rack-It, with its trendy packaging. There'll also be a chance to take a look at the latest game from Steve (**Quazatron**) Turner, **Magnatron**. No naked ladies, no competitions or gimmicks, just good honest games, says Hewson

IMAGINE – see Ocean

INTERCEPTOR Stand 3072
Pandora on Players seems to be the only new thing here

INFOCOM – see Activision

KEMPSTON Stand 3077
Lots of joysticks and mice plus preview of its exciting new Gem-style disc-based user interface for the new 128K+3

KONAMI Stand 3083
Lots and lots of arcade machines at Konami – as you'd expect really. Chances to play **Jackal**, **Iron Horse**, **Salamander** and **Wec Le Mans**, all for nowt. There's also a chance to buy multiple T-shirts in different colours and sizes and generally get Konami-ed. And anybody who wants to enrol in the Konami Software Club, now's your chance!

LEISURE GENIUS – see Virgin

LEVEL 9 – see Rainbird

LOTHLORIAN Stand 1621
Nothing new, unfortunately, though you'll be able to catch up on classics like **Legions of Death** which you may have missed

MAD – see Mastertronic

MARTECH Stand 3009
Among the crazy things demoing at the Martech stand are playable versions of **Slaine** and its new **Nigel Mansell** racing game thing. There will also be bargain deals on titles like **Nemesis** and **Armageddon Man** and there'll be T-shirts and caps and surprises too . . .

MASTERTRONIC Stand 1109
The Mastertronic output is so great it is difficult to say exactly what will be featured. There will be lots of the new Rack-It stuff including a few Hewson goodies and new things on the Americana label. The emphasis will be on Arcadia – Mastertronic's new arcade machines. The first two games will be on display running on the Amiga-based consoles. Worth checking out because this stuff is going to turn up on the Spectrum sooner than you think. Alien bashers who rate themselves can also take part in a major arcade championship who rate themselves can also take part in a major arcade championship

MATTEL Stand 3023
Mattel will be concentrating its efforts on the Nintendo games machine and will be showing several new games for it including **Gyromite** (the one that works with the little robot). SU readers will also be keen not to miss the Laser Tage gear and

SHOWGUIDE

Teddy Ruxpin. Well OK maybe you could usefully avoid Ruxpin

MELBOURNE HOUSE Stand 1109
Big changes at Melbourne House, recently acquired by Mastertronic. There will be six new titles on show and, although nobody would say anything about what is planned, they are a) major titles b) full price c) sort of adventurish in a way. Find out more on the day

MICRONET 800 Stand 3133
Modems a-go-go. Various bits and pieces at the show. **Shades** the multi-user adventure is being booted on to 80 columns so that it runs faster (on Spectrum too) and Micronet itself has a new chat system called Teleconference in which permutations of people can talk with one another privately or publicly. A chance to play **Shades** on the stand plus special offers on subscriptions are also promised

MICROPROSE Stand 1511
Lotsa stuff from Microprose which doesn't do things by halves. It is flying in for the show a real helicopter simulator plus pilot for dozens of lucky show visitors to have a go in. The thing is supposed to be astoundingly amazing and very, very, very expensive. There are also free flying lessons with Major Bill in America to win. There are some computer games as well, **Gunship** will be on sale and there will be previews of **Airbourne Ranger, Pirates** and **Project Stealth Fighter**, possibly on Spectrum. Origin Systems a separate computer company currently working with Microprose will also be on the stand showing something called **Space Rogue**

MIND GAMES Stand 1621
Available for sale will be its new πr^2

MIRACLE TECHNOLOGY Stand 4042
Modem makers Miracle (this is how we would all write if this were the *Sun*) is showing the 3000 and 4000 range of modems and a mysterious new product called the Maximiser which does clever things to existing modems though Miracle wouldn't say what exactly

MIRRORSOFT Stand 1601
Spectrum stuff is a bit thin on the ground compared to previous years. **Moon Strike** and **Mean Streak** will be on show but most of the rest is 16-bit. PSS which now forms part of Mirrorsoft will be showing **Fortress America** an ultra-sophisticated war game simulation

NEXUS Stand 1517
Unfortunately Nexus won't be showing anything new on the Spectrum, and you won't even be able to buy older stuff like **Hades Nebula**. Bit of a blow really

NOVAGEN Stand 3062
Mercenary will not be on the stand. (Well maybe not.) Novagen will instead be displaying **Mercenary II** for the first time. It's called **Damocles** and will probably only be on the ST but Spectrum owners should check it out – it's due to be converted

OCEAN Stand 1411
Will be selling its existing titles and showing the following range of playable demos: **Renegade, Gryzor, Combat School, Platoon, Freddy Hardest (Dynamic), Rastan Saga, Psycho Soldier (Athena II), Victory Road (Ikari Warriors II), Match Day II, Where Time Stood Still** (previously called **Tibet**) and **Mad Balls** (Ooer) . . .

ORIGIN SYSTEMS – see Microprose

OUTLAW PRODUCTIONS – see Palace

PALACE Stand 3041
Nothing too excitingly new but Palace will be showing the ST version of **Starship** a game that is supposed to be a cross between **Star Trek** and **Elite** and destined to rule the world. It's out on the Spectrum eventually so must be worth an early glimpse at. Also making a debut on the Palace stand is Outlaw Productions a new company formed under the Palace banner which will be releasing all kinds of stuff over the coming decades – nothing on Spectrum yet though

PHILIPS Stand 2534
Philips will be showing a vast range of monitors at the show from medium-res green cheapies to hi-res colour very expensiveys. Of interest to those whose TV has given up the ghost

PIRANHA Stand 1617
Lotsa games from Piranha. On the stand will be **Judge Death, Roy of the Rovers, Through the Trapdoor, Flunky, Mr Weems, Gunboat** and **Yogi Bear**. Wandering around the show will be the real **Yogi Bear** (Sat), **Berk** (Sun) and **Roy of the Rovers** (Mon) Don't miss the Spin the Wheel compo (it says here), T-shirts, posters, pens, etc, etc, etc. Also should be **Jack the Ripper** from St Brides

PLAYERS – see Interceptor

POWERHOUSE Stand 3142
Will be showing and selling **Soft and Cuddly**, as well as others

PSS – see Mirrorsoft

QUICKSILVA Stand 1621
As well as previewing **Pacland**, its new licence, there'll be the original arcade game for you to play.

RACK-IT – see Hewson

RAINBIRD STand 1011
Will be demoing its Xmas 16-bit releases, most of which will be converted across eventually. Titles include Level 9's **Knight Orc** and also **Carrier Command**. You'll also be able to pick up **Starglider** and **The Pawn**

REAKTOR Stand 1611
Centurions will be demoed, and there will be lots of special offers, competitions, balloons and T-shirts

SINCLAIR – see Amstrad

SINCLAIR USER Stand 1717
SEE INFO PANEL ON THE LEFT

SOFTECHNICS – see Edge

STREETWIZE – see Domark

SYSTEM 3 – see Activision

TASMAN Stand 1916
As well as its well known **Tasword** word processors the new disc-based **Tasword** +3 for the new 128K+3 will be on show

THE EDGE – see Edge

39 STEPS – see Ariolasoft

TRANSFORM Stand 1909
Will be showing off its range of business software, along with as many blank microdrive cartridges as you could possibly want. There's also a new printer interface and a range of Opus and Disciple disc software

SOFTWARE PROJECTS Stand 3140
SP is offering vast amounts of goodwill in their Hospitality Lounge, and a good long look at **Hysteria**, scheduled to be released in October

STARLIGHT Stand 1611
As well as displaying its current range, such as **Dogfight 2187** and **Deathscape**, there will be a demo of the new **Red L.E.D.** T-shirts and competitions too

US GOLD Stand 1311
Including Go! and Epyx. There'll be coin-ops of **Outrun** and others on free play, a look at Go!'s **Side Arms** and **Captain America**, US Gold's very own **Charlie Chaplin** game. Plus a humungous competition with a trip on Concorde and a computer worth £300 as first and second prizes. And some T-shirts. Probably. Plus bits and pieces of **Rygar, Solomon's Key, Indiana Jones, World Class Leader Board, Impossible Mission II** (maybe an early demo), something of **Gauntlet II** or **720°**. And from Epyx **California Games** and **Street Sports** on demo

VIRGIN GAMES Stand 3069
Launching **How to be a Complete Bastard** and **Deluxe Scrabble** for the 128K. There will also be news of **Action Force** its toy-tie-in, **Scruples**, its Xmas "biggie" and **Duelmaster**, an interactive fiction affair by the people who wrote the balloon game . . .

VIZ DESIGNS Stand 1611
Newly emergent Viz Designs will be displaying demos of its new game **Werewolves of London**. A real live werewolf has been promised too■

AND MEET SU

Alright, so you've seen what everyone else is doing at the show – but what about Sinclair User? We'll be there, of course, on stand 1717, and if you fancy coming along for a chat, a moan or anything else (within reason) we'll be pleased to see you

FREEPLAY
On the stand there'll be an Out-run coin-op machine – among others – and there'll be a high score competition, whereby you can have the chance to come up against C+VG's and Commodore User's (our sister titles) finest in a head-to-head day-by-day and there'll be an overall champ of the whole show.

COMPETITION
There'll be our now infamous Interactive Appraisal Competition, where you may well win Mr Sugar's very own 128K+3 (well, alright it's not his at all; what do you expect – miracles?) simply by trolling around the show and reviewing ten games that we'll select on the first day. If you rate the games the same as us - when we get round to reviewing them for the mag – you'll get to go in the prize draw for the new machine. Can't be bad, can it?

COME AND SAY HELLO!
Also on the stand will be numerous members of the Sinclair User team. Not only the ones who grunt at you down the phone, but people like Rupert Goodwins who'll be able to handle just about any technical problem you might have, Jon Riglar who will be on hand for games advice, Gordo Greatbelly (of course) who may well help you out of that sticky spot in The Little Elven Men Are Coming From the Secret Mountains Again Part II.

Also, Mr Programming himself, Andrew Hewson will be on hand and will quite happily talk to anyone who has an interesting question.

- Jon Riglar — Saturday 2-3 pm
- Andrew Hewson — Friday afternoon
- Gordo Greatbelly — Friday 11 am-2 pm
- Rupert Goodwins — Sunday 2.30-4.30 pm

GOODIES
And there'll be SU Kamikazi Bear T-shirts, SU binders, SU bags and back issues, the Megamix tape, games to play and goodies of all shapes and sizes just waiting for you to give them a good home

See you there!

MEET THE TOP PROGRAMMERS
Perhaps you want to be a programmer, or maybe you've got a tricky coding problem. Could be you just want to shake a real programmer by the hand! Either way, meet the experts. SU is having some top flight programmers on the stand.

- The Gremlin in-house Programmers who gave you Thing Bounces Back and Jack the Nipper and are just about to produce Coconut Capers — Saturday. All day
- Mike Mayall from Hewson (Southern Belle, Evening Star) — Sunday 2-3 pm
- Timothy Closs who did I Ball for Firebird — Saturday from 2-3 pm
- And you might be in time to catch the boys from Binary Design, who did Zub and Motos and Amaurote, or the Probe people who are behind nearly every game US Gold have ever released■

JUST ONE MORE GO?

In the world of arcades, where nothing matters but the next 10p in your pocket you don't want to waste your time on useless machines. So we took the top ten coin-ops of the last six months and then sent our agent Ferdy Hamilton into a secret warehouse deep in London's East End to check out the verdict. Here SU tells you about the best, and the rest of the year's top-grossing coin-ops



1 OUT RUN (Sega)

Many of us here at SU reckon this is easily numero uno in the coin-op world.

The merest glance at the screen shot makes it pretty clear *Out Run* is a racing game. But this is not some endless variant on *Pole Position*. Far from it. In *Out Run* you are more of a Bruce Willis whose main objective is to impress your girlfriend by zooming around in your Ferrari. For reasons known only to the makers of coin-ops you're also up against the clock and have to reach a whole series of checkpoints within a tight time limit. To keep playing you have to keep hitting those time points. And not hitting those lorries . . .

Unlike *Pole Position, Out Run's* road swoops up and down, a bit like *Enduro Racer*. This makes life more interesting, as you often shoot straight over the brow of a hill and mangle yourself under a truck.

Sounds a little dull? Wait. *Out Run* has brilliant graphics, a choice of three brilliant soundtracks and edge-of-the-seat gameplay.

Out Run is also one of the very best 'simulation' games. If you're lucky enough your local arcade will have the version with the full sit-in cabinet. Electric motors, linked with the logic board throws your seat all over the place during play.

Brilliant – just play it and pray US Gold doesn't botch up the conversion.

Incidentally, watch out for the Sega follow-up which is even better. *After Burner* is a jet fighter simulation with the same style brilliant graphics – it's a future number one, I'd say■



★★★★★ ★★★★☆ 9

2 SIDE ARMS (CapCom)

A classic example of this year's style. Scrolling shoot-em-ups in which you gradually collect more and more firepower. Must be something to do with the Middle East crisis and macho international posturing.

Anyway big guns are in, both in the arcades and on the home micros, and in *Side Arms* the guns are, as you will see, bigger than most.

The bad guy in *Side Arms* is Bozon which is not a very inspiring name. Despite this, Bozon is seriously dangerous and wants to kill everyone and everything on earth.



It's just you, Lieutenant Henry (or if you're playing as a two-player, just you and Sergeant Saunders) who can stop him. And stopping him involves blasting through ten tricky levels to reach Bozon's underground empire.

The best bit is the pick-up weapons feature. As you get further into the game there are some pretty interesting weapons you can add to your arsenal to help you on your way.

Side Arms isn't amazing, but it is a good solid blast that's actually very neatly presented■

★★★★☆ ★★★☆☆ 7

3 ROLLING THUNDER (Namco)

Not a particularly well known game this, it's kind of crept into the chart by being a consistent coin-swallower throughout the year.

Actually, I'm not a big fan of it either. By the time you strip off all the glories of the plot all that's left is a man with a gun trying to blast his way from left to right as far as possible. The central figures are big and colourful but in graphics terms the game has rather been overtaken by newer titles like *Double Dragon*.

It's sort of like *Impossible Mission* crossed with *James Bond*. The animation is very nicely done, and although your hero is a bit weedy and too tall, he runs around in about as pleasing a manner as you could expect from a rather weedy looking tall person.

No matter. *Rolling Thunder* has an interesting comic-book hero feel, lots of combat and platforms to jump up and down between.

Obviously a popular game, but it didn't do much for me, I'm afraid■

★★☆☆☆ ★★☆☆☆ 4



4 SOLDIER OF LIGHT (Technos)

These days every planet in the galaxy seems to be under threat, and your average *Soldier of Light* is kept pretty busy.

From the start, you choose which planet to save first – some are easier than others, but not much – then it's down to the rescue.

It's broadly a left-right scrolling blast and, like *Side Arms*, you can pick up extra features to improve on the pretty feeble bullets you start off with.

At the end of each planet you get



bombarded with more aliens, and then you have to jump and shoot what looks like the alien 'king'. Do that and it's on to the next world that needs you help.

Solder of Light isn't the most inventive game out but it's worth a play, if only to see the fabulous under-water graphics■

★★★☆☆ ★★★☆☆ 6

5 NEMESIS (Konami)

Yes, yes, I know it's ancient. But so's *Defender* and that's still great too.

Nemesis is still one of my favourites – and I can't be alone because, after all this time – it still makes it into the chart at the half-way mark.

TOP TEN COIN-OP CHART

1	OUT RUN	SEGA
2	SIDE ARMS	CAP COM
3	ROLLING THUNDER	NAMCO
4	SOLDIER OF LIGHT	TECHNOS
5	NEMESIS	KONAMI
6	RASTAN SAGA	TAITO
7	BUBBLE BOBBLE	TAITO
8	DOUBLE DRAGON	TAITO
9	FLYING SHARK	TAITO
10	COMBAT SCHOOL	KONAMI

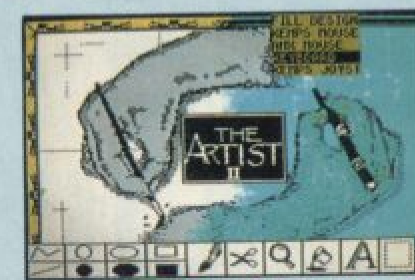
DATEL ELECTRONICS



GENIUS MOUSE 48/128/+2/3

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- Compatible with Artist II (see offer) and OCP Art Studio.

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- Top quality graphics package for Spectrum.
- Described by Sinclair User as "the best artist program – bar none".
- Superb quality multi feature.
- Pull down menus.
- Windows icon driven.
- Font and sprite designer.
- Zoom mode.
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- Flexible cut & paste.
- This package has too many features to list – it is safe to say it has them all!

Special Offer – Buy Artist II & Genius Mouse system for only

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State 48K or 128K version of software required.



ROBOTEK

- Robotics & model control made easy on Spectrum.
- 4 independently controllable outputs for relays, models, lights etc.
- 8 independent inputs for sensing etc.
- This is the product that the lego publication "Make and program you own robots" was based upon.
- Comes complete with cables.
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EXTENSION CABLE

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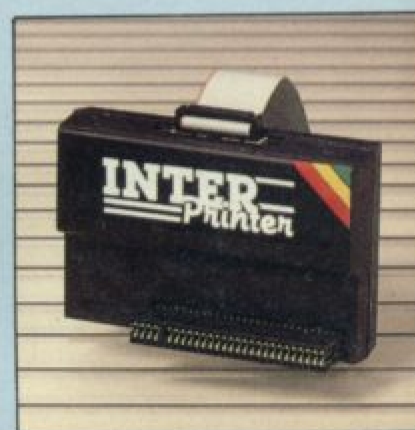
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- Superb styling.

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- Accepts any 9 pin joystick for maximum compatibility (Kempston system).
- Plus – delivers sound from games through TV speaker (fully controllable).

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- Fully menu driven.
- On screen keyboard and frequency plotting etc.
- Full 8 bit conversion.
- Complete hardware/software package.

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- Now you can backup your games to microdrive or tape.
- Simply press the button to "freeze" the program.
- Save to microdrive or tape.
- Special compacting techniques.
- Add pokes or peek program then restart.
- All backups restart from the point they were saved.
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- Supports rapid fire models.

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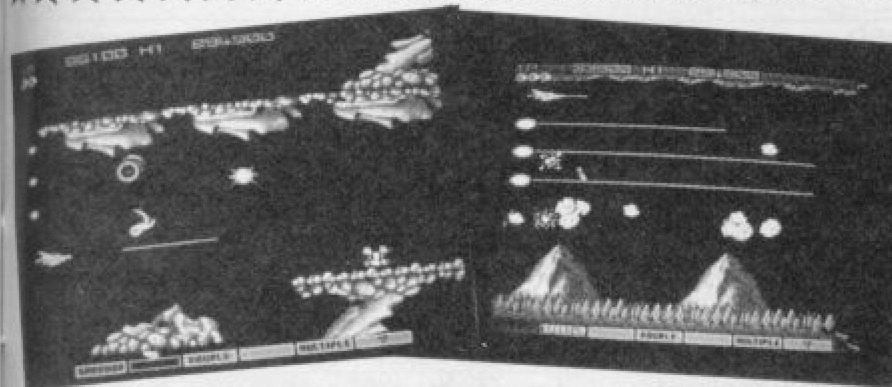


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- Maximum compatibility (Kempston system).
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JUST ONE MORE GO?



Just supposing there *is* anyone out there who hasn't played it yet, get dressed up, go smash your piggy bank, and get out there.

91

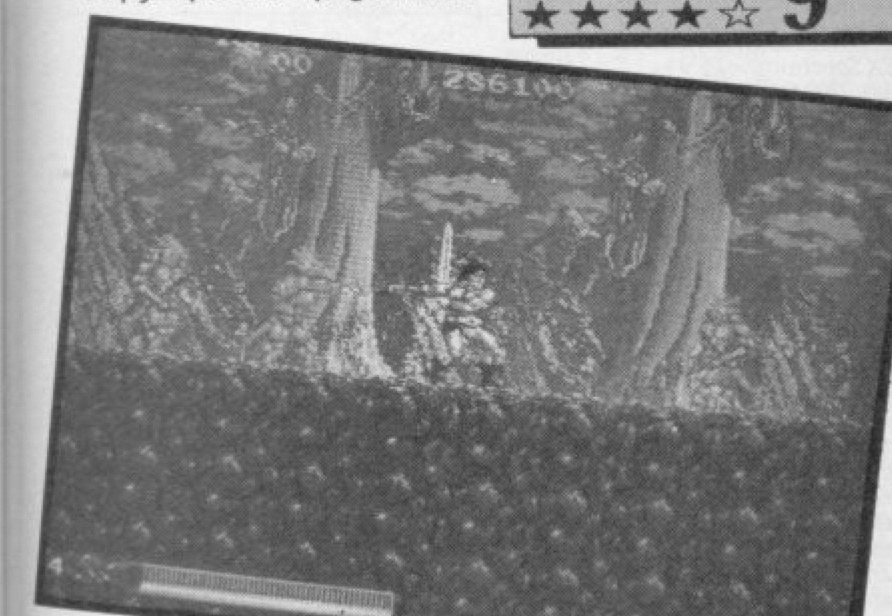
It's a wonderful left-to-right scrolling blast – now not such a clever thing, but that's because *Nemesis* has been the inspiration for so many games. And, before that *Defender* set the mould. But the reason *Nemesis* scores so highly is in its sheer playability.

The aim is to quite simply penetrate the alien defences as deeply as possible, wiping out all of the multi-coloured big-eyed weirdos in your path. You'll have to be careful to avoid the dead ends in the maze section, though.

It's a classic. Great graphics, great sound. And there are even special power pods which improve firepower, give you extra speed or extra missiles.

If you were writing a history of the arcades *Nemesis* would be one of those very few 'key' games you couldn't ever miss out■

9



6 RASTAN SAGA (Taito)

Ask any self-respecting coin-op gamer why they look a bit pale and tired looking at the moment and they'll tell you it's because they're spending all their money on this wonderful brutal machine.

For me, *Rastan* beats all the rest of this top-ten, hands down. You play a sort of gothic Conan-type character with bulging muscles and sturdy sword, hacking your way through level after level of evil henchmen until you reach The Evil One and win a chance to destroy him.

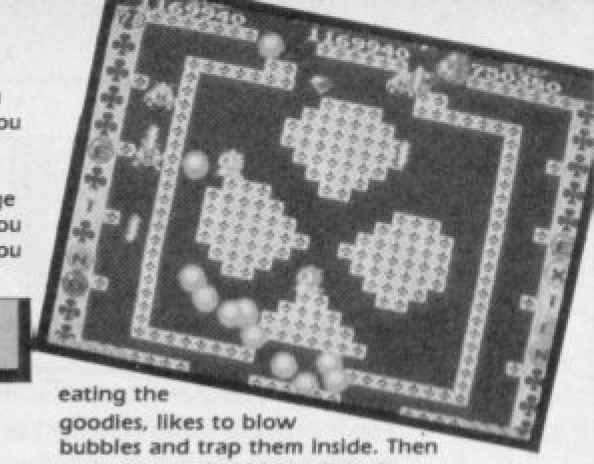
Enemies include ogres, bats, four-armed skeletons wielding clubs and all sorts. And to sort them out you get to pick up extra weapons as you go – including flame-throwing swords and axes.

Look, I'm not going to encourage you to play this . . . I'm ordering you to! If you haven't played this yet, you ain't lived■

10

COIN-OP CONVERSION CHART

Title	Spectrum licence	Game due
1 OUT RUN	US GOLD	Autumn
2 SIDE ARMS	GO	Autumn
3 ROLLING THUNDER	–	–
4 SOLDIER OF LIGHT	ACE	Christmas
5 NEMESIS	KONAMI	Out
6 RASTAN SAGA	OCEAN	Christmas
7 BUBBLE BOBBLE	FIREBIRD	September
8 DOUBLE DRAGON	–	–
9 FLYING SHARK	FIREBIRD	Christmas
10 COMBAT SCHOOL	OCEAN	Christmas



7 BUBBLE BOBBLE (Taito)

A whole series of 'nice' games followed on from the original 'cutie' of them all – *Pac Man* – all trying to recreate the same success. Games like *Dig-Dug, Amidar* and *Mr Do.*

After what seems like a reversion to blood-letting over the last eighteen months, where everyone refused to put a dime into a machine unless it has a good bit of decaptitation in it, now there's this throw-back. *Bubble Bobble* is a *very* cute game *indeed.* You play an all too lovable dragon who, instead of thrusting a switch-blade into the monsters which try to stop him eating the goodies, likes to blow bubbles and trap them inside. Then he bursts the bubbles, when the monsters turn into fruit, and then he eats them . . . Crazy plot, or what?

For all its cuteness, it's the closest thing since *Pac-Man* to the kind of incredibly infuriating just-one-more-go syndrome and there are 100 levels, each featuring different monsters, fruit and bonuses. What it lacks in graphics – and let's face it, they're hardly state-of-the-art – it makes up for in addictiveness. Only recommended though if you reckon you can handle the 'cute' factor■

8



8 DOUBLE DRAGON (Taito)

With *Renegade* just out on the Spectrum (from Ocean) it's good to see the coin-op follow-up *Double Dragon* doing so well.

Easily the best combat-style game around at the moment, this is street violence of the dirtiest kind, and featuring some of the best cartoon quality animation you'll ever see on any machine.

Check out *Outlands* on page 84 of this SU for a detailed look at this gret new game, but suffice it to say there'll be a huge tussle to see who gets the Spectrum conversion licence.

It's best played as a two-player game and it really does get the andrnalin flowing. Fights seem to take forever, and be genuinely exhausting. An intersting feature is the way weapons change hands during a fight – wind one of your opponents and he'll drop the whip or bat he's carrying. You can then scoop it up and use it against the next assailant you come across. It's just one nice touch in what is an all-round excellent game■

9

9 FLYING SHARK (Taito)

Nyoowww! Zipping through the air in his World War I biplane is Biggles Hamilton. He's invincible? No . . . he's crashed again . . .

It's a top to bottom vertical screen shoot 'em up with really neat graphics. In fact the game comes across from the play point of view a bit like *1942* with, surprisingly, *Nemesis* overtones. What this means is blast the ground target – buildings, tanks and the like – shoot the enemy planes out of the sky and – here's the *Nemesis* bit – you can pick up pods along the way which give extra



features – extra bombs, greater firepower.

If you liked *1942*, you'll love this. Personally I found the gameplay lacked the depth of other machines, like *Rastan* for example■

5

10 COMBAT SCHOOL (Konami)

Two years back you couldn't move – in the arcades or on your micro – without finding a whole host of *Track and Field* style games. (On the Spectrum it was games like the *Daley Thompson* series and the *Summer/Winter Games* titles.) They haven't gone away, but they've regrouped with combat style overtones.

Combat School is really a string of *Track and Field* events in a squaddie-training mould. As Joe and Nick (there's also a two-player option) you go through a series of tests on an army assault course including wrestling, shooting, running, scaling high walls and so on.

To play it's fun initially but, as a beginner you game is often rather too short. A game to watch first – or it could get expensive■

6

...WORD PROCESSOR

TASWORD is available for every Spectrum computer, each version specially developed to make maximum use of memory and keyboard layout. Control keys have been logically planned to ensure the user makes the most effective use of **TASWORD'S** powerful features. Combining a host of useful commands with uncomplicated procedures. **TASWORD** has the power and versatility required for effective word processing.

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for the ZX Spectrum ***£29.90***

Plug into your Spectrum and drive any printer fitted with the Centronics standard parallel interface. Supplied complete with ribbon cable and driving software. The user changeable interface software makes it easy to send control codes to take full advantage of the typestyles and features available on your printer. The software includes fast machine code high resolution screen copy software for Epson, Mannesmann Tally, Shinwa, Star and Tandy Colour Graphic (in colour!) printers. A special version of TASCOPY (shaded screen copy software) for this interface is INCLUDED in this package.



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SURGERY

Sinclair Surgery

Spectrum on the blink? Rupert Goodwins has a cure

DAISYWHEEL DRIVER?

I have a Spectrum Plus and have just purchased an Epson DX-100 daisy-wheel printer with RS-232 serial input. Will the Spectrum Interface 1 drive this OK, or would I be better off buying another interface?
Robert Morley
Hove
East Sussex
● *The Interface 1 has strictly limited printer facilities which makes it not the best choice for people who want to do dot-matrixy graphics things. But for a daisy-wheel it does the job, is standard, cheap and (now) reliable. Yup, buy the Interface 1.*

MORE SPEECH IMPEDIMENTS

I've got two Currah speech units and a Discovery disc drive. One Currah Speech doesn't work at all, and the other only works without the Discovery being connected. Can I get my Currah repaired, or at least get the other to work with my Discovery?
Alan Westmore
Croydon
● *Nobody repairs Currah Microspeech any more, because they are mostly one custom chip and a standard speech chip. There's not a lot you can do except change the chips over and, as the custom chip has been out of production for a while, dead Microspeeches are of academic interest only.*

And there's no way that you can make the working speech unit co-operate with the Discovery. They both make heavy use of the Z80's interrupts, as well as possibly clashing on the way they use the address bus. As my brother the tree doctor might say, you're stumped. Sorry

DUMPING ON THE D.M.P.

I recently purchased an Amstrad DMP2000 and a Ramprint interface. Every time I access Ramwrite the system crashes. Is this anything to do with the way the leads cross over?
Simon Arthur
Leicester
● *Eh? What? Not a bit of it. You need a new interface. Boy, do you need a new interface. Next*

MEMBRANE AND THE KEYTOPS

My Spectrum has developed a problem with the keys. I opened the cover and saw that the contacts of the keys in the membrane pad were broken. Does the complete keyboard need to be changed, does anyone sell a membrane pad, or can I fix the problem myself?
D V Raghav Humar
Sector 8, Plot 31
MVP Colony
Visakhapatnam
INDIA
● *It is usually possible to fix the keyboard itself, as the membrane pad is quite robust. The place it tends to fail is where the tails fit on to the sockets fitted to the circuit board. Fractures occur here, and a good if temporary solution is to trim the tails with a pair of sharp scissors just above the break, and then carefully sandpaper the side until the metallised strips have enough area bare to make contact with the sockets again. If there is a problem with the membrane switches themselves, then you'll need a new switchpad. With the Spectrum 48K, you have to prise the metal plate away from the plastic base. It's only held on with double-sided sticky tape, so it should come off without bending. On the Spectrum+ and 128, you have to remove all the screws from the underside of the keyboard. Take care not to lose any of the keytops. They can be loose. Then just slide out the old membrane and slip the new one in. It's impossible to get it wrong (I think...) but be especially light of finger when plugging in the tails. Like I said, they break easily*

*Amstrad's spares department sells membranes, but you'll have to tell them what type of Spectrum you have. The address is (a regular feature in **Surgery**) Sinclair Spares, Amstrad PLC, 169 King's Road, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4EF.*

THE BROTHER-IN-LAW'S PRINTER

I have just bought a Spectrum 128K+2, and I'm having trouble loading programs when I have my Alphacom 32 Printer connected. The logo goes straight into 48K mode.

My brother has the same type of set-up as myself and has no problems at all. Any information would be useful as my computer is still under guarantee
R J Nurden
Malpas
Newport
● *Try a spot of autodiagnosis. Get on the right side of your brother, and borrow his printer. If his printer and your computer work together, then your printer is grunted. If they don't, then either (a) borrow his computer permanently, or (b) take yours back to the shop and demand a replacement. May I suggest (b)? If the printer is at fault, then it might be cheaper to pick up a second-hand one then trying to get it repaired. Check the current prices first, in any case.*

DISCOVERING MORE AND MORE

I bought an Opus Discovery 1 disc drive for my Spectrum+ in November. I would really like a second drive for it, but Opus just says that it no longer makes the unit and can't sell me the expansion.

Where can I get a second drive?
G J Howard
Leigham
Plymouth

Can I upgrade my Discovery to work with a 128K+2 and still read all my old discs?
G H Symons
Wellington
Somerset

Where can I buy a Discovery+?
Alex Tregarth
Longton
Hampshire
● *The Discovery seems to be getting more and more popular as stocks of the Opus run out. Lots of people have requested information about adding a second drive, upgrading to 128K compatibility and generally doing interesting things.*

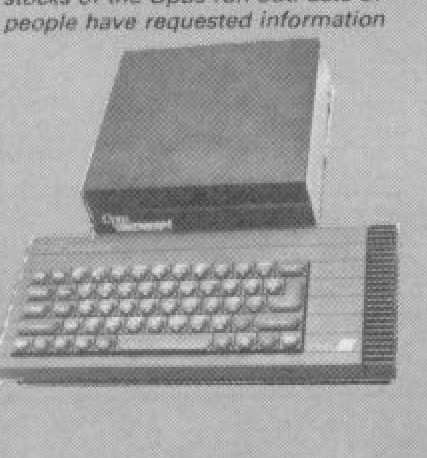
Firstly, any Shugart-compatible (that's most of them) disc drives can be used as a second drive and just plugged in. Big drives (5.25 and 8 inchers) will probably need an extra power supply. To use any new disc, you'll need to install a Ram chip called the 6116, and this is also needed if you want to fit the 128K up-grade. Liver Electronics, 9 Thornfield Road, Thornton, Liverpool L23 9XY will do the upgrade for fifteen quid + one quid P&P on a seven-day turnaround.

And there is now a UK-based club for Discovers: Thanks to

And there is now a UK-based club for Discoverers': Thanks to everyone who wrote in and said how good it is. It's free too, just send a large SAE (or IRC) and a bi-monthly newsletter can be yours. I also hear rumours about utility discs, and Roms supplied by the bloke who wrote the software, no less. Can't be bad. You want the address? The Spectrum Discovery Club, 8 Raynham Crescent, Black Hill, Keighley, West Yorks BD21 2TP.

I'm unaware that anyone still sells Discoveries, and most people who own them seem to want to hang on to them. If anybody knows of a large stock sitting around in a lonely corner, then I'll pass it on

Finally, check out the November '86 SU for more info on the Discovery.



BAUDY SOLUTION FOR BROTHER

I have a Brother M1109 printer that I can't get to work with a 128K Spectrum through the RS 232 port, although it works with a Kempston interface in Centronics mode. I've tried using FORMAT "P";9600 and OPEN #4;"P". I've set the internal switches to Serial mode
D J Elliott
Lymington
Hampshire
● *First try FORMAT "P",1200 or FORMAT "P",300 because the Brother might not be running at 9600 baud. If nothing happens, then your serial lead (which you don't mention) has to be the guilty culprit. Also try disconnecting (if you haven't already) the parallel printer lead from the printer. For reasons totally obscure some printers object to the lead being present if the serial interface is to be used*

EASY QUESTION NUMBER ONE

Please tell me if I can use an Alphacom 32 printer and a Kempston Joystick interface on my computer all at once and could you tell me what extras I would need. Ta
Robin Sutton
Bramham
West Yorkshire
● *Yes. None*

EASY QUESTION NUMBER TWO

Can I use the Interface 1 to drive a modem?
Kjell Krohn
Norway
● *Nope, the Interface 1 isn't capable of driving a modem in anything like normal usage.*

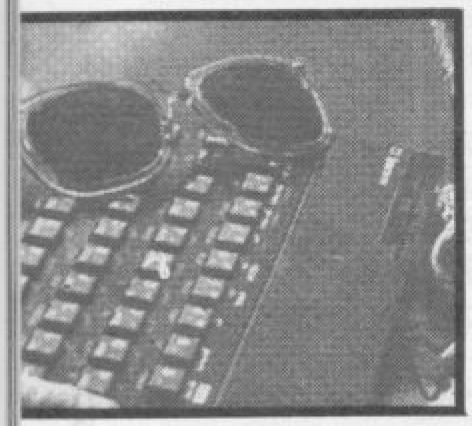
SMALL AND LARGE DUMPS

I've got a Centronics interface E with a Shinwa CP-80 printer which I use with my Spectrum to print out screen dumps. Small screen dumps are OK, but biguns are distorted, and there are thin white lines all over the picture.

Is it possible to make the large dumps work properly?
Russell Graham
Germany
● *Yes. And it's simple, but needs a little experimentation. Before doing the screen dump, do LPRINT CHR$(27);"A"CHR$(11);. The CHR$(11) sets the amount by which the paper advances between lines, and you can make this bigger or smaller depending on the results you get. If you still get either a white line or some overlap where the bottom of one line and the top of the next mix, you might like to try replacing the "A" in the line of Basic above with a "3", and the 11 with numbers between 20 and 40.*

All this depends on your printer being fully Epson compatible. If it isn't then look in your manual to find the control codes for setting the 'line spacing'

IF you reckon we're talking rubbish don't just stand there . . .
Tell us what you
Stick your comments on paper, fill in and cut out the coupon below and send it in . . .
And if you don't send us your picture – the sillier the better – we'll have to print a picture of a slug



Ninja Hamster CRL

Weel hillow der anuider Med Celt ere se wha da ya mean Ninja Hamster only worth hait stars. Nay its onlay fur way weans (babies) ye know an it gets so boooorin' arter a way while ya know so to but (untranslatable) an the funny way faces rund da side are a bit daft yae know. I'd eve geen it a wae fie (five) an not wiasted me money. Sa go an get your med celt tae translaet four ya den, and if your niece a me I'll get yur magaseen nect month so to but■

Another Crazy Celt
Bushmills,
N Ireland
Game Choice:
Army Moves

Zynaps Hewson

Wow! This game is the best I have ever played. Congratulations on picking it as a Classic! It may be an imitation of Nemesis but it's still an excellent game and, in fact, I think that it's even better. The sound at the beginning is the best (for a 48K game). The smooth scrolling graphics make you think you're actually in the 'Blake 7' space craft fighting off the aliens. With this game you won't be bored in a hurry■

Richard Howarth
Lytham St Annes
Lancs
Game Choice:
Exolon





Micronaut One Spectrum

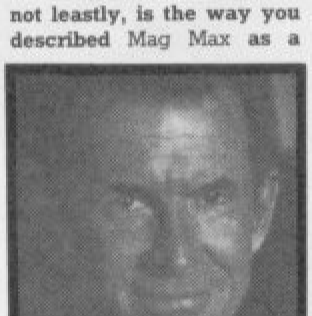
I totally agree with Tamara Howard's review of Micronaut One. It's brrrilliant!! It deserves *more* than just a Classic surely! The way you glide past the tunnel walls is so smooth you just wouldn't believe it's a computer game – you'll think it's real, well I did.

I just love the race game (maybe it's because I can't get anywhere in the proper game). Pity about the sound (but it is the best excuse I've heard about the little sound there is on the Spectrum)■

Samuel Tang
Slough, Berks
Game Choice:
Tai-Pan

Mag Max Ocean

You lot at SU make out that Mag Max is such a good game! Shame on you, conning all of us into buying it, I was totally disappointed. I don't know what you see in it let alone see in the graphics in it! You can't see the tiny bullets which are shot at you unless you use a magnifying glass. The colour is pathetic, graphics are just OK, but very small. Lastly, but not leastly, is the way you described Mag Max as a



power machine when he's collected all his parts. Rubbish! He's a bigger target than ever. It's not like the coin-op, it's not good, it's not worth £7.95 ... but it *is* worth writing about so that you can earn a tenner to buy Leaderboard■

Marvyn Campbell
Ayr, Scotland
Game Choice:
Leaderboard

● *Did I call him a power machine, did I? Or did David put it in when I wasn't looking?*

Shockway Rider FTL

A Classic? I wouldn't give this game two stars. It has a lasting appeal of about three seconds. Graham Taylor says the game is completely original – and when I loaded it up I thought I was playing Metro Cross. How much did FTL pay you to give Shockway Rider a classic? If they were prepared to play it for more than five minutes they may find that the game is monotonous and boring. I'd buy Star Runner from Codemasters if you want a game like this and with the change buy Level 42's *Running in the Family*■

Iwan Griffiths
Shrewsbury
Game Choice:
Micronaut One

● *Mark King says: Who are FTL, and who's this Graham Taylor geezer?*



Deathscape/ Kick Boxing Ariolasoft/ Firebird

I've reached the conclusion that Tamara Howard's reviews of Deathscape and Kick Boxing have been confused. Deathscape is incredibly boring. 'Fast and furious' says Tamara. 'Shooting red shapes' is more accurate. This is difficult because it's not easy to guess where the laser will fire! Six stars? Three would be ample.

Now to Kick Boxing. Not particularly addictive, but not a bad game. The graphics are good, the game in general is at least average for the price. Definitely worth eight stars minimum. I do agree about budget software's bad name, created by games such as Olympic Spectacular. I'd say, a feeble game awarded seven stars, illustrating reviewer's bad taste■

Andrew Richardson
Hull
Game Choice:
Saboteur II

● *Tamara says: Well I might have got a bit mixed up that day. It was last Tuesday or was it this Wednesday fortnight?!?*



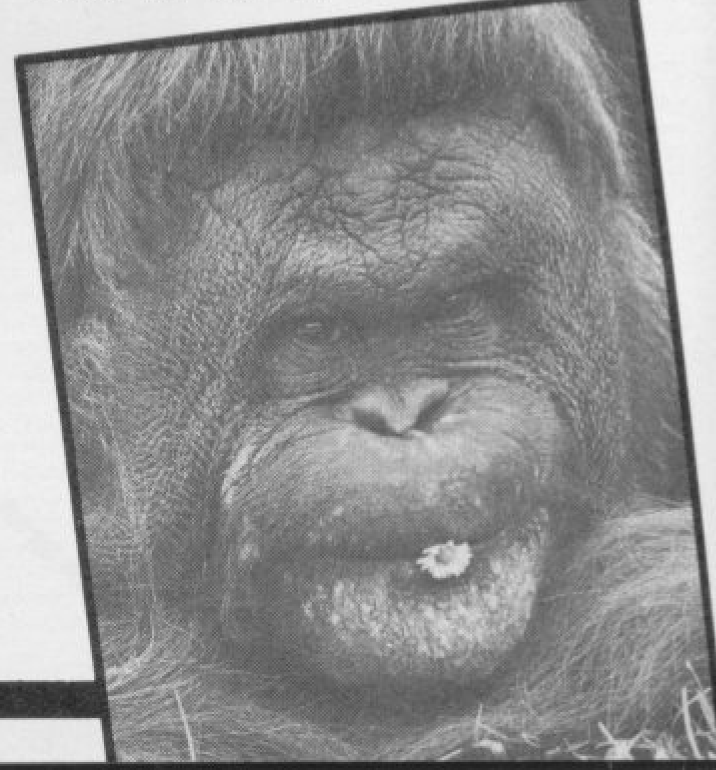
Starglider 128 Rainbird

Very wicked! Stupendous! Awesome! Incredible! Wow! I'm running out of superlatives. Starglider is undoubtedly the best thing since the electrically heated toilet seat! I'm not going to waste time agreeing wholeheartedly with your review because a swamp-dwelling mattress from the planet Squornshellos Zeta would have given it five stars and a classic status.

Cosmic! Buy it!■

Andrew Leae
Chester
Game Choice:
Exolon

PS If you haven't got a 128 buy one too! It's worth it just to play Starglider



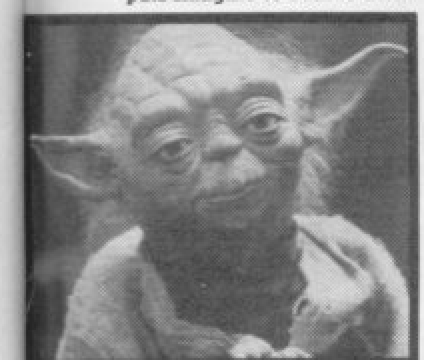
The WRITE STUFF





Army Moves
Imagine

This trashy game got ten stars!?? Jim Douglas claims the game has 'great graphics and gameplay'. All right, the graphics aren't totally pathetic, but they're certainly not as great as he claims. There's far too much colour clash. He also says that it's addictive. The game is about as addictive as toothache. This game puts Imagine to shame after



such cult games as Terra Cresta, Slap Fight and Green Beret.

Army Moves, 10 stars minus 8 stars = 2 stars■

Neil Howie
Alvaston
Derby
Game Choice:
Five Star Games II

● *Jim says: Well I've had toothache for a week now and it's proving really addictive, so there*



Prohibition
Infogrames

Now, I'm gonna take this very calmly ... WHAT THE *!!?? are you talking about giving this game eight stars. The graphics are very good, but that's about it. Sound, where is it? I quite liked the arcade version, but the Spectrum version has lost it's playability. Alright for the first few games, but it soon gets boring. So if you are really a Prohibition freak, you're in for a very nasty shock■

Ian Parr
Surrey
Game Choice:
Stainless Steel

Saboteur II
Durell

I totally disagree with your review of Saboteur II I'm also an owner of Dan Dare. OK, it's good but Saboteur II is better! The map is *giant* and it's great fun exploring the building. Fighting is quite hard, but it's enjoyable, the best way I've found to win is by throwing an object at the android then doing a series of low punches, then maybe to finish him off a flying kick. I must admit, the rooms are all practically the same, but the tunnels and bats are good. The graphics are brill and I like the way the central character does her somersaults. I think it deserves at least ten stars■

Philip Muscott
Chelmsford, Essex
Game Choice:
Enduro Racer

● *Somersaulting females. Oooer!*



Saboteur II
Durell

Having thought Saboteur II would be good I bought it a month ago. Unfortunately I was mistaken. I should have taken heed of your review (Surprised? Actually my IQ is 11) as the game is nothing brill and (at least for me) cannot be compared with good old Saboteur I which is truly a masterpiece. First of all, the animation is terrbily slow and awful. As well as that, except the tune at the beginning, there is a deathly silence during the game. The graphics are just the average and as a follow-up to the original Saboteur they should have been much better. It is also hard to kill androids (somehow all those deadly weapons, seem harmless). Take my advice and don't buy it – after a couple of weeks you'll throw it away■



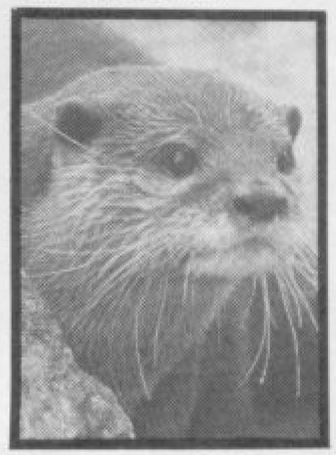
Gurham Ulusay
Kolej-Ankara,
Turkey
Game Choice:
Shadow of the Unicorn

Cobra
Ocean

I'm writing this because I reckon you ought to know your reviewers are round the bend. Cobra is fab, it has excellent graphics, great sound effects, and is not as difficult as Kevin Watkins made out in the August SU. How often did he play the game? Admittedly, it is a bit tough for the first few goes, but once you have got the knack, it is much easier to do■

David Gillman
Stamford, Lincs
Game Choice:
World Games

● *Who is Kevin Watkins?! I ain't never heard of him – that's for sure (Ed)*



Barbarian
Palace

How did they do it? How did Palace create such an amazing, outstanding beat-them-up?

When I played it on my friend's Spectrum I was totally amazed. I just love it when your head gets chopped off and when that odd-looking Gnome drags you off when you've been killed.

The characters are so lifelike and well drawn. The best beat 'em up ever. So why didn't you make it a classic, you measly little warthogs?■

Tim Rice
Hereford
Game Choice:
Barbarian

● *Who you calling a measly little warthog?*

Every so often — well very often actually — you write to tell us that we know nothing about anything and insist that some program we trashed is actually the best game ever. Conversely you blast us for saying something is great that you absolutely loath and detest.

Enough is enough. We can't take any more, if you think you're so clever you write the damn magazine. We mean it!

Every month we'll devote a page to a selection of your opinions on the latest software. Don't get mad – write the review you think the game should have received and we (subject only to space) will print it.

Now, aside from seeing your work in print we will send you a crisp £10—er, cheque — with which to buy the software title of your choice — tell us what you plan to spend the money on if your review is printed.

One request, we want to know what you look like so send us a picture. Any old picture will do — you at home, in Ibiza, in the garden, even making silly faces in photobooths we don't care.

So get cracking — write your reviews and send them together with the completed coupon below.

YOUR REVIEWS
Maximum 150 words. No swearing, libel or illegibility and come out of the corner Don't beat around the bush – tell us straight what you think. Send your review (or any *recent* game) plus your picture and fill in the coupon. *send the lot to The Write Stuff, Sinclair User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Name..

Address...

....

The program I would most like to buy with my tenner is ....

*** Reviews supplied without full name and address will not be considered for publication.**

NEXT MONTH

Which are you?

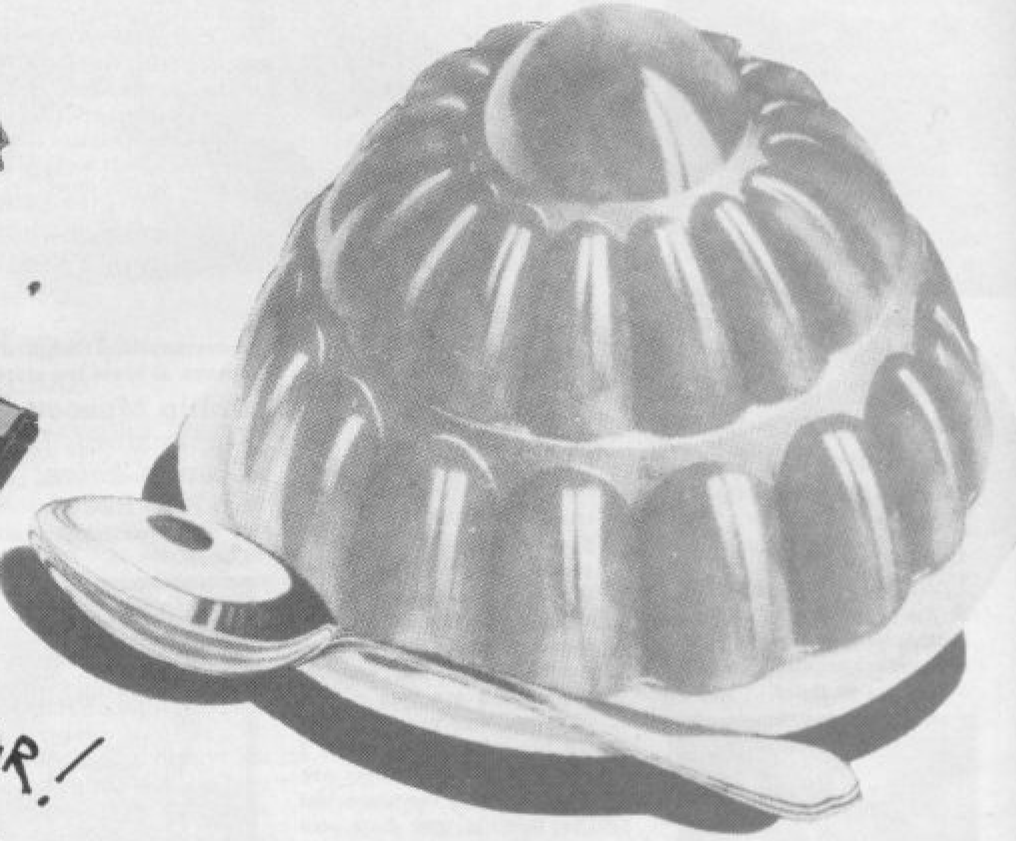
A wiz-kid intergalactic super hero feared throughout the seven galaxies?

Or

a small green piece of jelly?



▲ A WIZ-KID INTERGALACTIC SUPER HERO



▲ A SMALL GREEN JELLY

● In terms of alien bashing do you rate as 'dangerous' or 'hah hah hah you missed us, ner, ner, ne, ner ner,'. We give a bunch of the best Spectrum games to some Guinness world re-cording arcade wizards (well, American, actually). How do their high scores measure up to yours?

● Exposed!! What happened to the games that never happened? We tell all ...

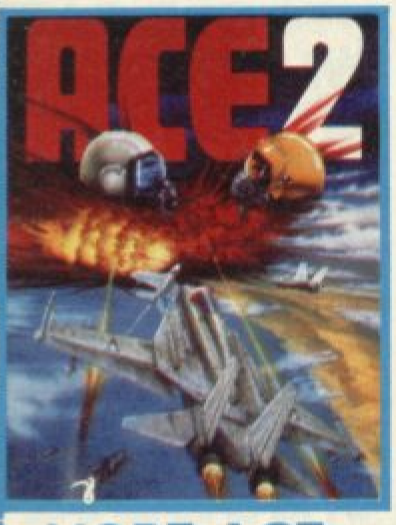
● Aaaaaarrrgh! We're eating software! It's com-ing out of our ears! All the hottest Autumn releases – read about 'em here first!

● We don Shades and offer very very serious money off modems

● Plus Plus 3 latest. The first disc software for Amstrad's now-sensibly-priced machine on test

SU: Definitely not for jellies

Out October 18th



MORE ACE

Verrr-whoosh! Alright. This is the thing for me! Ace 2 from Cascade is the sequel to their highly successful Ace (never . . . yup!) and it sounds twice as good.

One key difference is the two-player option – you can team up with a mate and take on the enemy forces together. The screen is then split in two, with a cockpit view for each plane – one on top and the other underneath.

Of course, you'll have to be a little more careful than usual, as shooting down your buddy isn't the best way to begin the mission.

Cascade is also promising more advanced enemy intelligence than in Ace, on top of the air-to-air and air-to-ground missions.

Streetdate: late September.
Price: £8.95

TRAP DOOR SEQUEL A GO-GO

Sequels-a-go-go! Trap Door II squelches on to the Spectrum after ages in the pipeline.

The reason for the delay is Don Priestley went away and worked on the fairly uninspiring Flunky after the first game. The graphics in Flunky were OK – still the same big colourful sprites that we'd seen before in Popeye (another Priestly creation). But the gameplay just wasn't there.

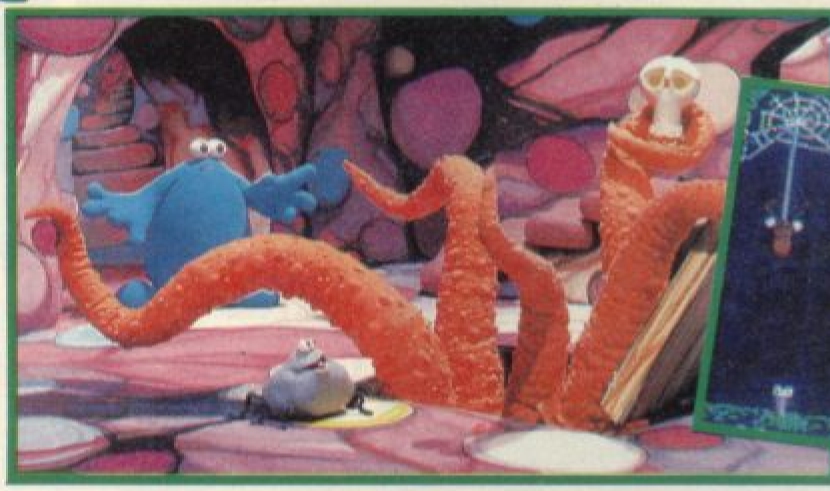
Piranha promises us that TDII will be a return to form – better than the original even. We hope so.

Anyway, the plot: you find yourself back in the castle where the first game took place. Guiding Berk and his mates through the cutesy-yuk locations, avoiding the many cutesy-yuk monsters and performing those tasks.

Providing you can stomach so much nicely done nastiness, Trap Door II is looking good.

Streetdate: October.
Price: £9.95









DINAMIC FREDDY'S QUIFF

Ole! It's another game from those Josès down Dinamic way. And it's called Freddy Hardest, and it's coming out from Ocean.

You are Freddy Harvest, the most clean-cut, square jawed, blue-eyed be-quiffed hero ever to traverse the universe.

But, owing to the sort of colossal blunder that all these dumb good-lookers make, you find yourself crash-landed rather unceremoniously on a dreadfully unfriendly planet somewhere in the back of beyond.

Knowing full-well that the chemists in the area close in about half-an-hour and you'll have no time to pick up your vital supplies of thixotropic (That's a good word – what's it mean? – Ed) hair laquer for the weekend, you decide that maybe you should be off pretty sharpish.

And lo! If we aren't presented with a left-right scrolling run-along game with not very impressive speed. So far so standard . . . But. For a start the graphics are big and pretty good. And it's very difficult in an Ultimate-ish kind of way.

You get the chance to move Freddy left or right or to make him jump. You can also let rip with a laser-bolt, only after aiming first, though. Your foes either look like potatoes with big hooters or strange disc-like things that bob up and down. Very odd.

Streetdate: September.
Price: £7.95



PRIME MINISTER IS TRIVIAL

FOLLOWER

Any day now Mozaic will release Yes Prime Minister on to an unsuspecting public.

After the firm's earlier Secret Diary of Adrian Mole – not a well regarded program among SU staff – you might be forgiven for saying so what. But wait a mo' Yes Prime Minister may be something else.

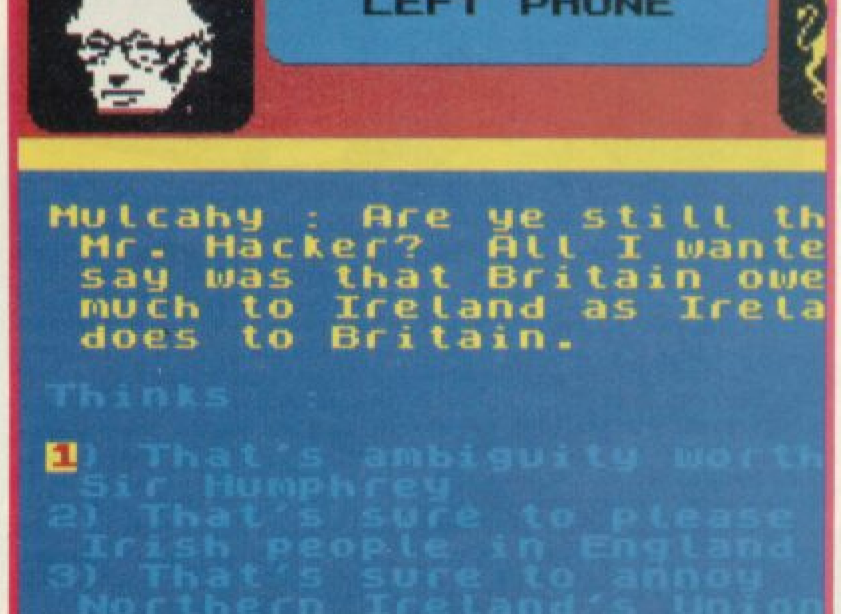
First off it's actually very true to the TV series and the demo version we saw made us laugh a bit. Secondly it's programmed by Oxford Digital Enterprises which did such a good job on Trivial Pursuit.

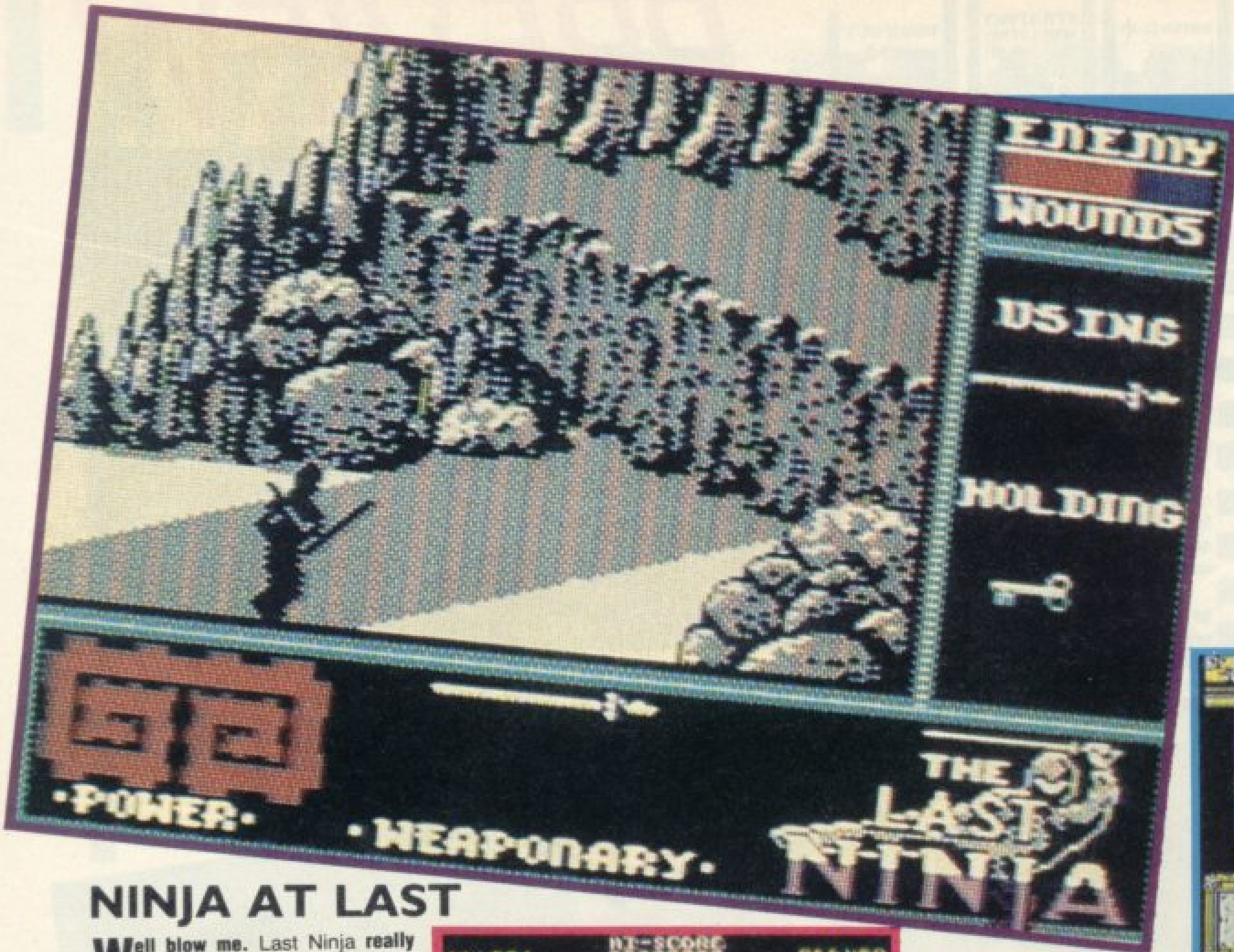
Visually it looks pretty smart – a cursor system to select options like answering the phone or consulting the diary, and pull-down menus for other options. Nothing to type in at all.

You play Jim Hacker, riding a sea of political turmoil, just trying to last out the week in Westminster. Naturally this involves much dealing with the urbane Sir Humphrey and his youthful sidekick Bernard.

It sounds to me pretty much like the sort of thing that will ship lots at Christmas.

Streetdate: October.
Price: to be confirmed

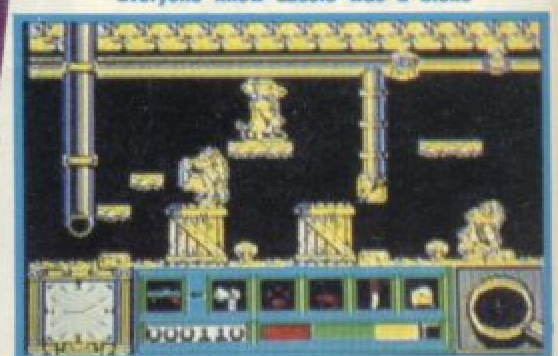




OLD BAZZA

Why oh why do people insist on pretending that animals are good at utterly preposterous things? Take Basil the Great Mouse Detective, **from Gremlin, for example. What a stupid idea. It's a licence from a film by some low-rent cartoon-house called Walt Disney or something, so it must be their fault. Walt who? Whoever would choose a daft surname like Disney?**

I mean, it's bad enough with people pretending that Skippy that ridiculous kangaroo could talk, or box or whatever he did, or the dolphin whose name I forget could play the piano on rollerskates or Lassie could run for miles and miles after being hit by a train and then radio for help. Everyone knew Lassie was a bloke



dog anyway . . .

[What the hell are you blathering on about? Walt Disney is the most famous animating house in the world. and every school holidays all the decent films get pushed out to make room for its films. You never heard of *101 Dalamatians? Pinochio? Snow White?* No? How lucky can some people be? – Ed.]

It seems *Basil the Great Mouse* is one of Disney's most recent efforts. The storyline involves totally lovable Basil Mouse – a rodent with sleuthing

NINJA AT LAST

Well blow me. Last Ninja **really does exist on the Spectrum. After what seems like years of struggling with bizarre Hungarian export laws, System 3 has managed to wrestle free a Spectrum screenshot from behind the big wooden fence or whatever it's called.**

Currently Ninja **is the top selling C64 game – mainly because it looks and plays very well indeed – a sort of combat version of** Zaxxon, **if you see what I mean, with very stylish graphics.**

On the evidence of this shot the Spectrum version looks pretty impressive too.

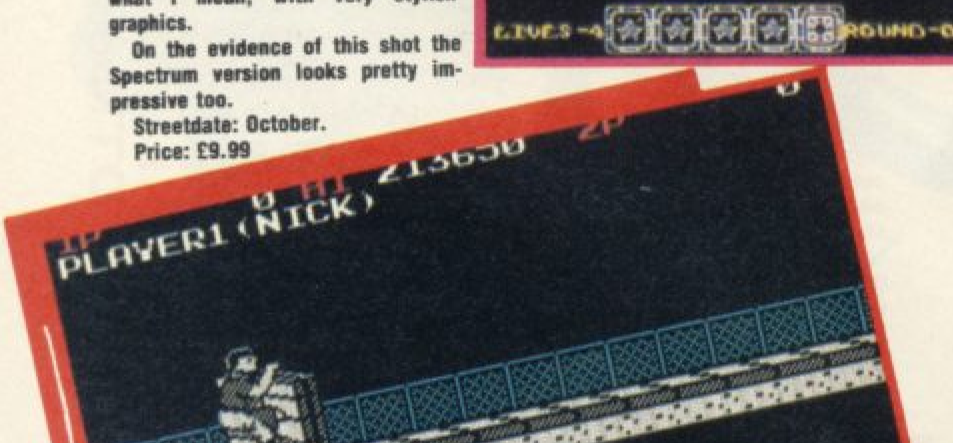
Streetdate: October.
Price: £9.99



HERE'S THIS HERE RYGAR

Here y'are. Take a quick shufty at this. It's Rygar, **and it's probably going to be one of the bigger selling games this Christmas. It's from US Gold.**

Just thought you'd like to know.
Streetdate: October.
Price: £7.95





COMBAT COIN-OP

What's this, then? Daley Thompson **meets** Commando**? Well, yes, sort of. It's** Combat School **and it's Ocean's latest coin-op tie-in.**

It's about a couple of good old boys who have enlisted into the ranks of the red white and blue to prove their mettle in the name of Uncle Sam.

Still, no matter what you think of the war moral *per se*, you'll have to admit that Combat School **is an extremely addictive arcade game.**

In essence, it's very much like the sports sims we've loved and loathed over the past few years, with events like the obstacle course and sprinting against the clock.

Then there's the firing range, where you've got to shoot as many targets as possible.

If you're looking for a fairly inventive combination of some top brass games material, Combat School **could well be it.**

Streetdate: October.
Price: £7.95

BETTER SKATE THAN NEVER

Who said the return of skateboards was probably the biggest waste of time since replacing your Volkswagen badge? Only a few extremely boring people – including me – who aren't the slightest bit interested in trundling around on a piece of plastic that looks like a big rollerskate). Well we can all go away, because 720° **is going to be big.**

It's one of a cluch of US Gold's Christmas coin-op releases that include such heavyweights as Outrun **and** Gauntlet II. **The aim of the game is to scoot around your local skate park and rack up as many points as possible by performing cool moves. Hanging ten and all that.**

So now all we have to do is hope that the games comes out before everyone loses interest in skateboards again and skateboarding becomes about as cool as dropping an ice-cream down your shirt.

In short, USG had better get it's skates on. Hahaha.

Streetdate: November.
Price: £7.95

PREVIEW

(AND WHY NOT?)

capabilities – and a horrible rat called Rattigan, who has kidnapped Dr Dawson from his home in the basement of 221b Baker St, where he lived with Basil.

And I reckon Disney hasn't got an original idea in its collective head, as the story is an obvious lift straight from Arthur Conan Doyle's famous *Sherlock Holmes* books!

The graphics make the game look like your standard old platform game, and I don't believe anything that Gremlin says about it involving features like the way you can collect disguises and put them on to get to other bits of the game, or follow the trail of clues to Dr Dawson. And I don't care that the graphics look great.

[Oh shut up you shocking old cynic. The screens look pretty good, and there's no getting round it – Ed.]

Streetdate: September.
Price: £8.95





FORCE BE WITH YA!

It's burnt cork and balaclava time again, people. Action Force from Virgin is set in the thick of a coup on a small island somewhere in the Pacific where evil Cobra forces have expelled allied civilians and military personnel.

Diplomatic solutions were no-go from the start, and it is decided that a more, er, direct form of action needs to be taken. The island, Botsneda, was a spy-station for the Free West, keeping a beedy eye on all the tin-pot little countries that no-one particularly cares about until they declare war on someone and it emerges that they might have the odd link with a really really big Soviet territory.

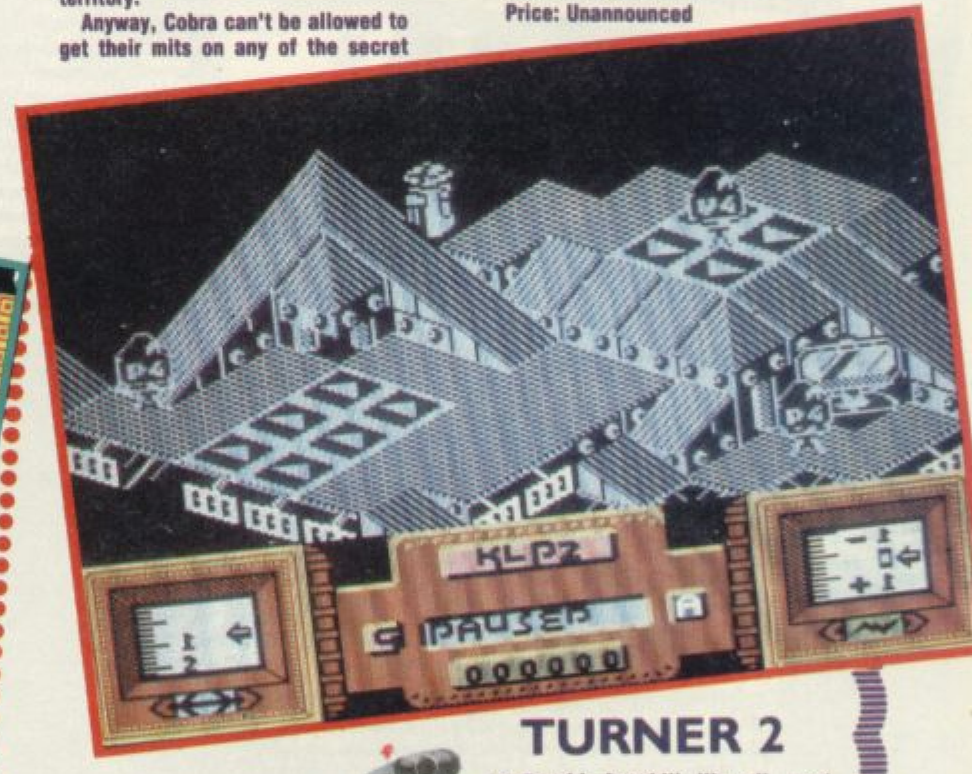
Anyway, Cobra can't be allowed to get their mits on any of the secret info, since most of it was probably about them. Bring in the Action Force. Somewhere on the island is an all-important computer disc, which stores the toppest of all the top secrets. It's possible that it was destroyed in the fighting when Cobra stormed the island, but no matter what the situation is, Cobra MUSTN'T GET THE DISC!

As a member of the Action Force, you have to protect the little green buggy (just to the left of the fourth palm tree) from the Cobra forces, as it trundles along, on the way to the East side of the island where the main intelligence complex is. Once there, a fellow Force member will hop out and begin to poke around for the disc.

And if that isn't enough to make you gasp with anticipation, what would you say when you were told that it is in fact a toy licence deal à la Masters of The Universe/Gobots.

Action Force is going to be a smooth-scrolling shoot out, and it looks great. We'll be most upset if it doesn't turn out to be any good. And I'd imagine Virgin will be too...

Streetdate: October.
Price: Unannounced



HYSTERIA!!?

Hysteria is the new thing from Software Projects and has appeared a bit out of the blue, since everyone was expecting Attack of the Revenge of the Mutant Jet Set Willy or whatever it's called to be next off their production line.

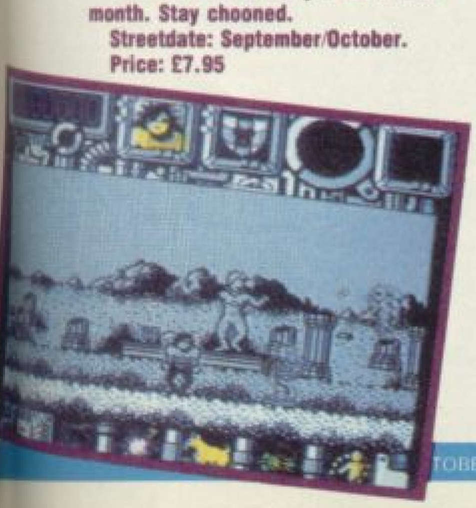
Anyway, Hysteria is a left-right scrolling runner-jumper promising great graphics and fast action.

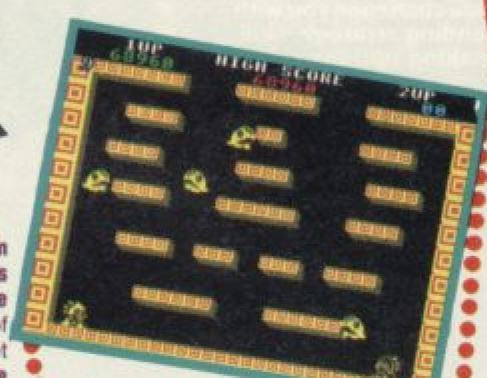
Gameplay-wise you have to progress time-wise, until you've bumped off enough nasties (which come in all shapes and sizes) to warrant a battle, fight-wise, with the bad guy from each level. Collecting lemons will for some reason allow progression to a higher sophistication or effectiveness of weapon.

The plot goes like this: a really bad sect of loons is attempting to transport a horrible monster forward in time from its prehistoric origins to disrupt the current state of affairs. You, as the final surviving member of a crack space warrior team must smash it back through time. Cracking stuff . . .

We'll be able to tell you more next month. Stay chooned.

Streetdate: September/October.
Price: £7.95





BUBBA!

Blop! Look what just bounced on to the page. It's a screenshot of Bubble Bobble from Firebird. Only enough room to tell you that it's a conversion of a Pac-Manish coin-op and we previewed it last month anyway. But it looks about as authentic a convert as you could wish.

Streetdate: October.
Price: £7.95

ARCTIC ARTS

What goes trundle-squeak trundle-squeak? Not Articfox from Electronic Arts, that's for sure, because you'd never be able to sneak up on anything if your tank made a ridiculous noise like that. Instead, I suspect Articfox will make a sort of hmmmmmMMmmm sound with maybe a vvvvrrrrr when you turn a corner. But this is largely by the by.

Electronic Arts is a totally brilliant (What evidence to you have for this? – Ed) American company who has had the benevolence to convert lots of its titles to the Spectrum. Articfox is the furthest along so far and it's a tank warfare simulation set in the future, where you have to fend off aliens from the Arctic circle. They've made themselves busy by trying to fiddle around with the chemical structure of the atmosphere, so they can breathe without assistance. Obviously, any faffing around in the make-up



of the air will prove fatal to every human on the planet.

In you go, equipped with a 150mm canon and a handful of mines, to take on the entire alien force.

'Fox is solid 3D graphics based – a little like an up-market Battle Zone and there are strategic elements too.

EA (whose self-publicity campaign consisted of sending a foam ball to press people all over the place) is working on a number of other Spectrum titles including Bard's Tale (Parts I and II) a fantasy adventure thing and Pegasus a militaryish hydrofoil boat effort – part sim part shoot 'em up.

Streetdate: September.
Price: £8.95

TURNER 2

"Oooh! Aaaah!" We all went when pictures of Steve Turner's new game, Magnetron came into the office.

It seems so long ago now that Quazatron came out (to which, quelle surprise, Magnetron is the sequel) that we'd almost forgotten it.

But the original game wasn't half bad – an SU Classic in fact – and hence the interest now in Magnetron.

All we know about the game so far is that you are in control of your old pal, KLP2, and you've got to take him around a big old spaceship by the planet Quartech, bumping off aliens left, right and centre.

Watch this space (or somewhere else) for more info.

Streetdate: November.
Price: £7.95




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In honour of the outstanding excellence of this, the ultimate golf game, U.S. Gold have organised a competition to find the European Computer Golf Champion of 1987. In every World Class Leaderboard game there is a scoreboard. Practice your skills, test your courage and then play your best possible round on the Ultimate course – The Gauntlet – Record your best score, have it verified by an independent witness and send it to U.S. Gold. Novice, Amateur and Professional – there's a prize for each:–
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Novice: 10 free golf lessons with the "teaching professional" of your local golf club.
When all entries have been received – closing date 31st September 1987 – the top four players at each level will be called to a central venue to play-off for the title European Computer Golf Champion 1987 and receive their trophies and prizes.
screen shots from CBM 64/128 version
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PREVIEW

PREVIEW IS COMPILED BY JIM DOUGLAS



QUICK SPRINT

Anyone who sends out a press release headed "Vroom!!!"" is obviously at their wit's end creatively and was pretty lucky that a less benevolent member of the *Previews* team didn't consign the sorry thing to the bin.

Fortunately a fellow genius who is no stranger to the writers' block stumbled upon it and took pity.

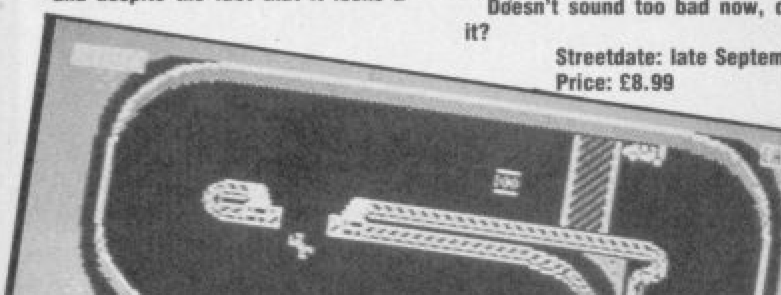
The end.

What? Oh, the game. Yes. ahem. Well, it's Super Sprint by Activision and despite the fact that it looks a little bit like a tedious old top-down plan-view round-and-round-in-circles race game Activision is blowing its trumpet as loud as it possibly can about it. Mainly to drown out suggestions that Grand Prix Simulator, from Code Masters is pretty much of the same, only a third of the price, one supposes.

Super Sprint's a pretty hot coin-op licence and as well as shooting around the circuits and beating your mate (or the Spectrum) in a race, you've got to pick up the special thingumies which pop up now and again. There are also hazards like mini-tornadoes and oil spills to get in the way . . .

Doesn't sound too bad now, does it?

Streetdate: late September.
Price: £8.99



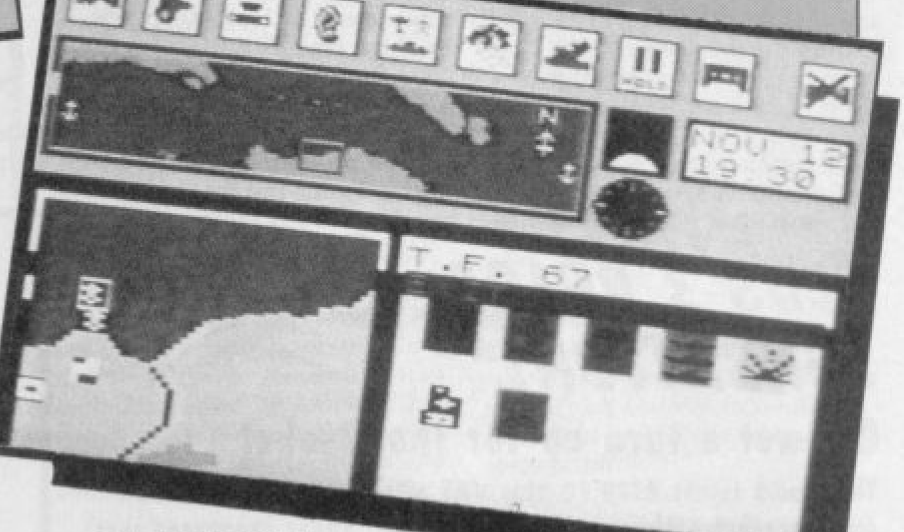
RYGIL REVENGE IS SWEET

Revenge at Rigel is (gasp) an adventure from Mastertronic. Graphic adventure? Strategic adventure? Some other kind of adventure that isn't really an adventure? No an honest to goodness text adventure! (Gasp! Do they want to go bust?)

Well OK it does have a few graphics but not many. Mostly it's just a very long, convoluted, complex and giant (over 200 locations and two loads) adventure in the classic mould.

At a mere £1.99 it should have adventure fans gibbering with delight. We played the preview version and couldn't get out of the first location.

Streetdate: October.
Price: £1.99



GUADAL CHIPS?

Woa! Wargame time again! Guadal Canal from Activision is one of those strategy things where you get to play around with thousands of simulated lives while listening to your tape of the 1812 Overture and waving a little plastic flag of the nation of your choice.

This time it all happens around the famous battle of Guadal Canal, where, during the Second World War, the Americans and the Japanese fought for control of a pretty tiny island.

Taking the role of either General MacArthur or Admiral Yamamoto, you have to do the sorts of things you'd expect, really, like deploying troops, orchestrating fighter attacks etc etc.

It all sounds topping, and if war is your particular choc-ice, then Guadal Canal may well prove to have mint chips on the outside.

Streetdate: September.
Price: £9.99

OLD COIN-OPS NEVER DIE

Take a look at these screen shots. Look like a tolerable arcade thing – say around £7.95? Hah! Wrong! This is Bosconian. It's from Mastertronic and costs a mere £1.99.

If you think it looks familiar it is, the game is based on a fairly elderly coin-op that dates back to 1981.

Its a space game in which you collect fuel bonus lifes extra guns and other bits and pieces for the space ship and blast and dodge a lot.

Nobody at Mastertronic could come up with a plot for it – "you blow up space stations really" was one modest comment.

It's looking good and earns itself some instant credibility by being from the excellent Binary Design.

Streetdate: October.
Price: £1.99



GETTING MORE DRUID

Hands up everyone who remembers Firebird's Druid? Right that's enough to make it worth my while to tell you about Enlightenment – the sequel.

In case you don't remember Druid, it was a kind of Gauntlet affair, except that it had a few more twiddles and allowed you to cast lots of different spells, and create a monster to help you out in sticky situations.

Enlightenment is essentially the next stage along the line from Druid. This time there are around sixteen levels, and loads of aliens to avoid too, and you'll have to carefully select which spells to employ in combat situations, just like the first game.

The most exciting bit about Enlightenment is the fact that you get to control up to four characters. The characters are spirits made up from the four elements – earth, wind, fire and water. Each will be handy in one sort of scuffle, and totally useless in most others, so you'll not want to faff around too long deciding whose going to take on the head spook.

No screen pics to be seen yet though.

Streetdate: November.
Price: £7.95



Who says adventure game players are weird? In the background we see the famous programmers of Level 9. In the foreground is Wayne Revenspear (ne Spoggit). Wayne has just spent 2,457 hours playing Level 9 adventures from beginning to end. Living entirely in the dark, lit only by the radiation coming from the glow of an elderly black-and-white TV, and eating only Big Macs with extra ketchup and drinking Coke, Wayne finally completed the last adventure solving the problem of how to get the third ring of Zorb from the tupperware dish at 3 am. When Wayne finally emerged from his room his appearance had changed somewhat. "By the runes! Tis a thing of evil and darkness and mayhap there will be much merriment and mockery and taking of the piss among my fellows," commented Wayne. "We took him to the doctor but he could only suggest Wayne join a heavy metal band," said his worried mother

PLUS 3 PRICE DROP SHOCK!!!

"I'm very shocked that we had to drop the price of the Plus 3" said Alan Sugar.

PLAY BY MAIL SLAMMED AS "DANGEROUS" BY TORY MP

"You can't half get a nasty cut from those pieces of paper" said Teddy Taylor outspoken Conservative MP for Southend.

Z88 'A WINNER'

"In our research laboratories only the Z88 among all home computers was black and ran BBC Basic," said Britain's brightest boffin Sir Clive Sinclair.

*PLUS 3 PRICE SENSATION!**

Cor wot a turn up for the Books!

The Plus 3 is not £579.78 plus VAT after all!! Amstrad's own comic prankster Alan "here's a funny one" Sugar announced that the whole thing was a joke! "It was a leg pull pure an' simple! We thought we'd have a bit of a joke at our dealer network's expense — we told them this ridiculous price for the Plus 3 and they fell for it! What a corker!"

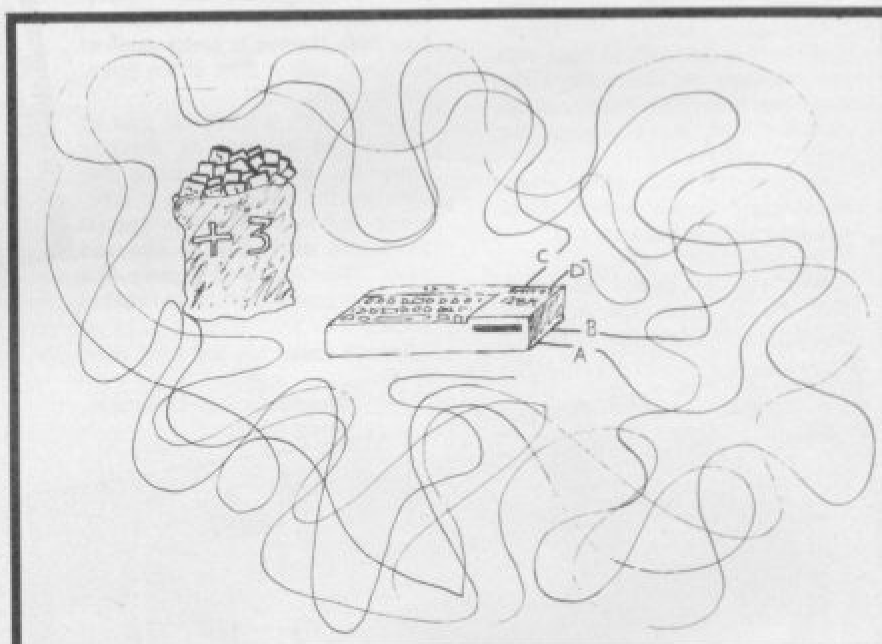
The industry's own Mr Humour added, "when people like SU started believing it we wus stitched up good and proper — but by then we'd already managed to sell one or two at the joke price!"

A giggling Alan Sugar has now revealed the correct price for the Plus 3. It is £579.45 *inclusive* of VAT.

(* Completely untrue.)

GREMLIN'S BIG QUIZ No 2

Question: Study the picture below. "Which of the lines A, B, C or D is connected to the big sack of Plus 3 Disc software?



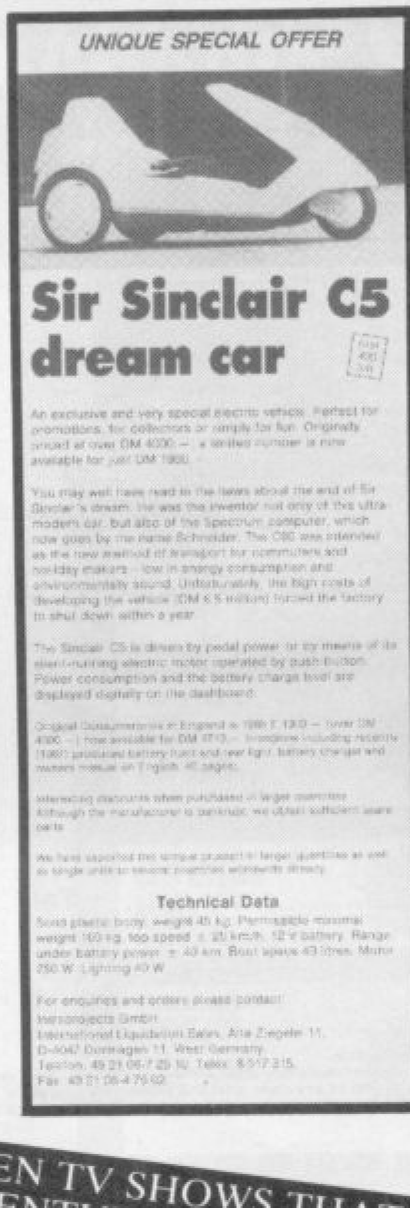
Answer: Didn't you do big quiz No 1 in August SU?



● *Gremlin* was flicking aimlessly through a German trade magazine the other day, as we all do from time to time. It was called Export Markt and had a great many pictures of bathroom fittings and electric ligh sockets in it.

Gremlin was dozing peacefully reading the badly translated copy and giggling intermittently when, GASP, SHOCK, CRIPES "Sir Sinclair C5 dream car" it said. It was a "unique special offer" in which for a mere DM1710 this "ultra-modern car" which is "low in energy consumption and environmentally sound" (low in speed and battery life it doesn't mention) could be yours.

Though pleased to see Sir Clive's some-would-say-deathtrap-tricycle on offer once more, *Gremlin* was taken aback at that price of DM1710. In English money that's a bargain £570 which is considerably more than the thing cost when it was first launched. According to the ad the C5 cost £1,300 when it first appeared. This is so far as *Gremlin's* memory goes completely untrue. Still – if you want to buy more than one of them – "interesting discounts" are promised . . .



GREMLIN'S TOP TEN TV SHOWS THAT DOMARK'S NEW VENTURE TV GAMES SHOULD NOT CONSIDER ADAPTING AS COMPUTER GAMES

1) Songs of Praise
2) Eastenders
3) The Great Philosphers
4) Vanity Fair
5) Paint Along with Nancy
6) Floyd on Fish
7) Juliet Bravo
8) Howard's Way
9) Blind Date
10) Bandung File

Gremlin



CAPTION COMPO

Medium quality offerings for Gremlin's caption competition only this time around-.Most of the jokes revolved around very bad television programs. Of these the best was probably "Altogether now, 'Neighbours, everybody needs good Neighbours with a little understanding . . .'," from Barry Leigh.

And what a truly terrible TV programme Neighbours is. On a different theme Gremlin was quite impressed by Mark Illingworth's "Cm'on guys, first one to find the main character in the colour clash". So true.

Yet the winner, if only because it was completely unlike all the other entries was "This is the most boring flea circus I've ever seen!!" from Stuart Braithwaite from Dalserf in Scotland. He might get some money at some point.



THIS month we have the Dom-Dom brothers both pretending to be James Bond staring moodily at the camera. What though lies behind the stern visages of the terrible twosome? Your ideas on the form below to reach us by October 1. Send to Gremlin Caption Compo No 12, SU, Priory Court, 30/32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU

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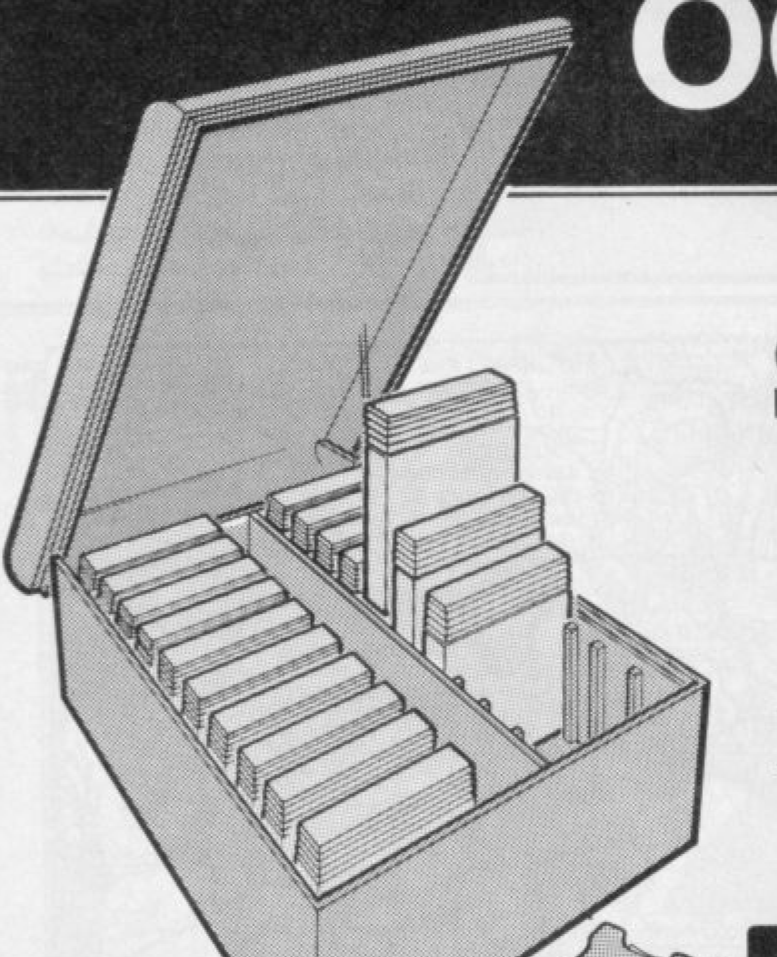
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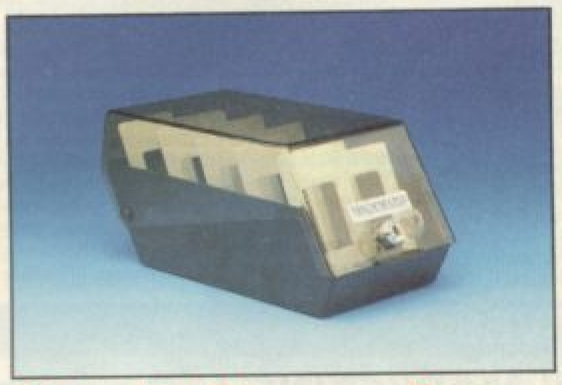


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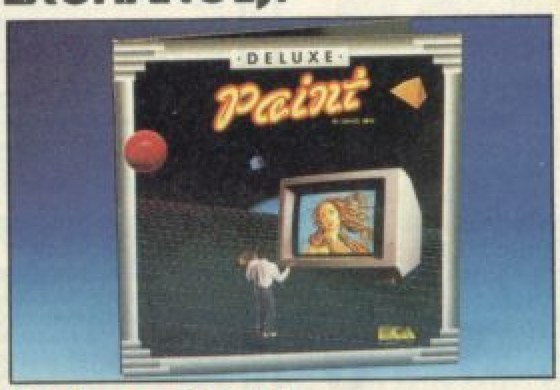
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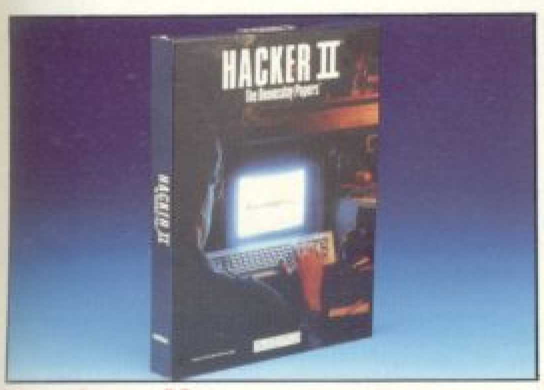




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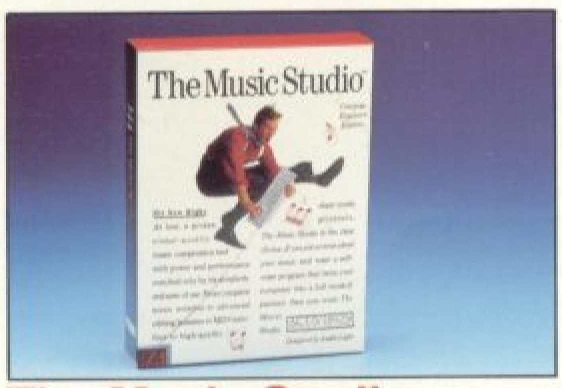
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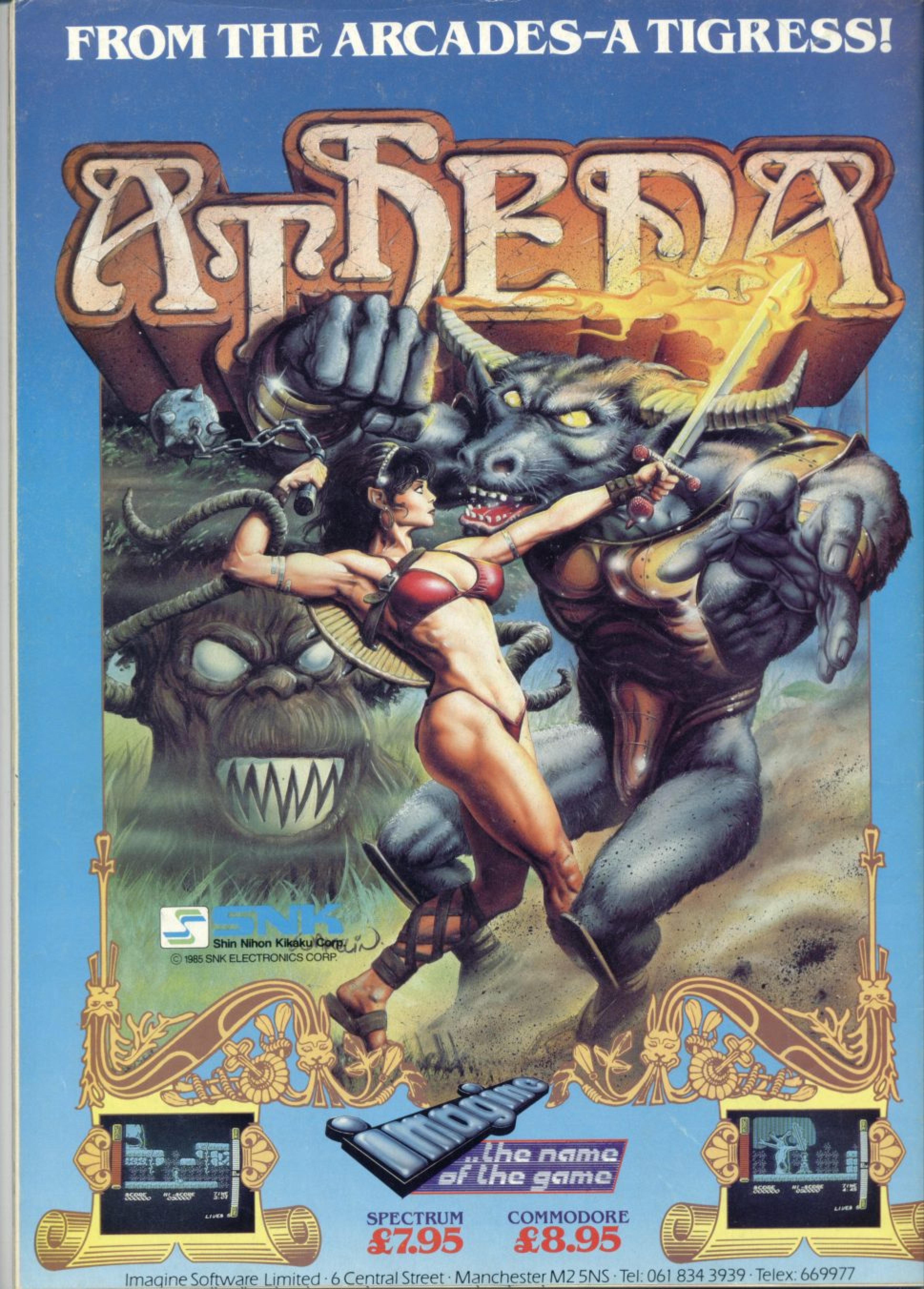
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